

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

THE ILLUSTRATED MESSENGER

GLAD TIDINGS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Digitized by Google

1419. e. 1629.
2



Digitized by Google

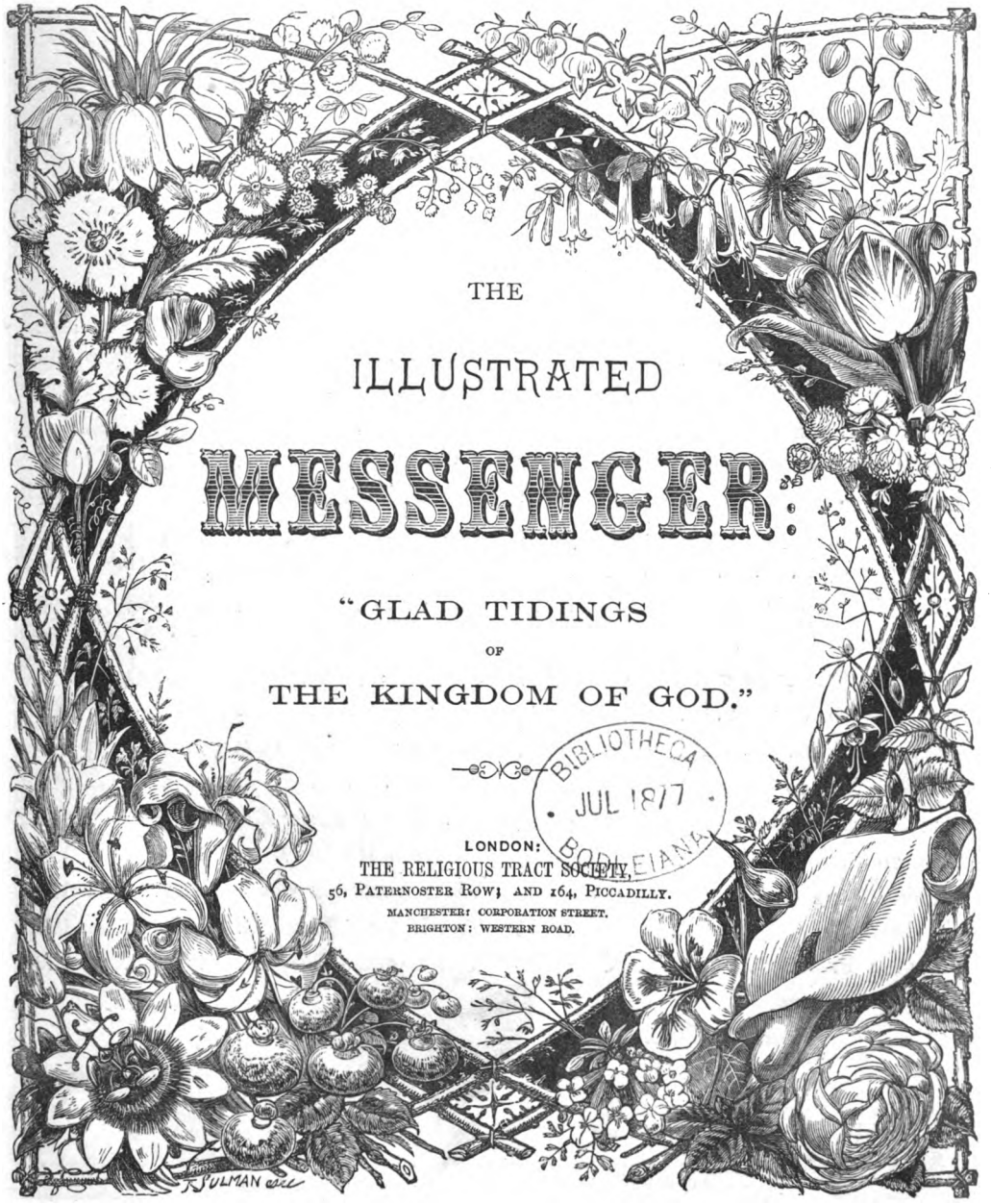
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



"AS COLD WATERS TO A THIRSTY SOUL, SO IS GOOD NEWS FROM A FAR COUNTRY."

Digitized by Google



THE

ILLUSTRATED

MESSENGER:

"GLAD TIDINGS

OF

THE KINGDOM OF GOD."

BIBLIOTHECA
JUL 1877
BODLEIANA

LONDON:
THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,
56, PATERNOSTER ROW; AND 164, PICCADILLY.
MANCHESTER: CORPORATION STREET.
BRIGHTON: WESTERN ROAD.

COMPRISING Nos. 33 TO 64 OF "THE ILLUSTRATED MESSENGER" SERIES.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Thomas Cranfield	5
"Mighty to Save"	9
What will the End be?	13
The Anchor of the Soul	17
Christ, the Saviour of the Lost	21
What shall I carry with me into Eternity?	25
The Wrath of the Lamb"	29
Why should I Study the Bible?	33
The Man Bitten by the Serpent	37
The Doomed Village	41
Trying to Feel Better	45
They Forgot to Pray	49
The Sword of the Spirit	53
Seek to Find	57
"The House Appointed for All Living"	61
"Only a Pearl"	65
A Song that broke a Sinner's Heart	69
How to Spend Sunday	73
Good News for the Streets and Lanes	77
The Dying Thief	81
The Lamb of God	85
Don't Despair of a Cure	89
The Good Physician	93
Evidences of Regeneration	97
Converted; or, "This is God's Man"	101
Hope or Fear in Death	105
Riches	109
The Law and the Gospel	113
Why did He Die?	117
What Seed are you Sowing?	121
The Hidden Treasure	125
The Eastern Shepherd	129

Digitized by Google

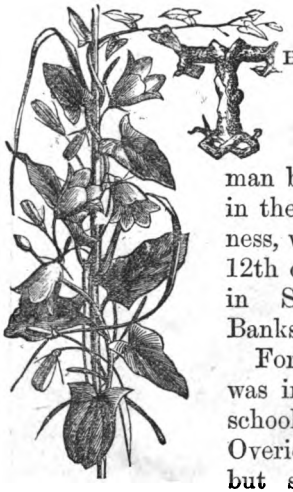
THOMAS CRANFIELD.



THE RECRUITING SERGEANT OF THE OLDEN TIME.

Digitized by Google

Thomas Cranfield.



Thomas Cranfield, the son of an unlettered journeyman baker, untaught in the ways of godliness, was born on the 12th of March, 1758, in Smith's Rents, Bankside, Southwark.

For seven years he was in the parochial school of St. Mary Overie, Southwark, but seemingly with little advantage; for, being of a vicious and cruel disposition, and disliking his book, the seed of instruction was sown on a stony soil. To play the truant, and misspend his time, was his delight. Foolish jesting was among his follies; and swearing, lying, and stealing were among his sins; but never, perhaps, was he so well pleased as when indulging his disposition for cruelty and brutality.

He who in his youthful days could break the Sabbath, rob the pockets of his mother, hang cats and dogs, and find merriment in the dying agonies of tormented creatures, must needs have gone far in depravity. It is said that in giving way to his savage disposition, he made a complete slaughter-house of his father's cellar. At one time he hung a playfellow by the neck, and at another set fire to a house: but, providentially, the struggling lad was discovered in time for his life to be saved, and the flames of the dwelling-house were extinguished. So depraved was Thomas Cranfield when a boy.

In his fourteenth year he was bound apprentice to a respectable man, a tailor, who did his best not only to instruct him in his business, but to reform him. He knew not the task he had undertaken. Young Cranfield had sinned and suffered. He had been in many instances in great danger of death, and the goodness of God had rescued him: but neither what he had suffered, nor his signal deliverances, at all affected his mind; he had grown more hardened in sin, returning to it as the dog to his vomit, and the sow to her wallowing in the mire.

Hardly could he read a chapter in the Testament, and very little could he write, when he was bound apprentice; in fifteen months afterwards, however, he had made some progress in reading and writing, and obtained an indifferent knowledge of his trade. During this time he had been taken regularly on the Sabbath to the house of God; but his wilful disposition was not to be restrained, and he ran away from his master. Oh! what a thorny path is that which is trodden by the wicked!

Reduced to extreme distress, he sold his clothes and his Bible: the latter was

Digitized by Google

the gift of his mother; and then, like the poor prodigal of old, he began to think of the table that was once spread for him, and of his present hunger and wretchedness. So low was he reduced, that the master for whom he now worked made him share with a favourite dog his daily allowance of food. At last he bound himself to another master, and worked from four in the morning till eleven or twelve at night, receiving for his services little food and no money, while his slightest faults were visited with the severest chastisement. Once more he ran away, intending to return to his first master in London. Such was Thomas Cranfield as an apprentice. What less than the mighty power of God could change his heart, and guide his feet into the paths of righteousness?

We have next to look at him as a soldier. Falling in with a recruiting party belonging to the 39th regiment of foot, he enlisted, and was soon on board ship, bound for Gibraltar. At that time General Eliot was governor of the fort.

The siege of Gibraltar by the Spaniards, the desperate attempts to reduce the fortress, and the determined resistance of the British, are among the memorable events of European warfare. Thomas Cranfield was one of the most daring of the garrison; he despised danger, and provoked the Spaniards by coolly fishing from the rock within reach of their artillery. He ventured on the most hazardous enterprises, and performed acts of outrageous valour. Though compelled by the short allowance of food to eat the flesh of cats and dogs (for bread was sold at a guinea the quartern loaf, and the entrails of a pig at four and sixpence per pound); though shot and shells were continually falling around him; and though his companions were swept from his side into eternity,—his heart was unimpressed with his deliverance; he cared for nothing, but even seemed to take delight in the bloody scene.

How great are the evils of war! What hateful passions! what garments rolled in blood! what cruel sufferings! and what awful consequences does it involve!

Cranfield, in all his recklessness and impiety, was mercifully preserved, that the slave of Satan might become a faithful soldier of Christ.

In the year 1783 he returned home a corporal. During his absence, his father had been taught, by a heavenly Instructor, to know Him "whom to know is eternal life." He received his prodigal son as a gift from God, in answer to his prayers, and took him on the Sabbath-day to worship in the sanctuary. The preaching of the Rev. W. Romaine and the Rev. R. Cecil was made the means of opening his eyes to behold the wondrous things of God's holy law, of bringing him to true repentance, and of inclining his heart to believe in Jesus Christ, as having died for his sins, and risen for his justification. From that time, but not without some backslidings, he continued to grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of the Redeemer, abounding in faith, zeal, and good works, and furnishing a striking example of the mighty power of the grace of God. Thus the careless was awakened, the cruel was made kind, and the slave of sin became the willing servant of the Lord.

Filled with love to Him who had

Digitized by Google

plucked him as a brand from the burning, and with concern for the souls of his fellow-sinners, and fired with zeal for God's glory, he began to give proofs of his willingness to endure hardships, to make sacrifices, and to spend and be spent in the service of his gracious Saviour. Much had been forgiven, and he loved much.

Among the brickmakers of Kingsland he established a prayer-meeting, and collected money to relieve their distress in winter. At Stoke Newington, Tottenham, Rotherhithe, Kennington, Southwark, and in the wretched neighbourhood of the Mint, with the assistance of his friends, he opened Sunday-schools. Thousands of children had the benefit of his instruction, and hundreds declared the good that had been done to their souls.

The state of London was awful when Thomas Cranfield began his Christian career. Impiety, and crime, and wickedness abounded: and it required more than common boldness to attempt to stem the current of iniquity. He was connected with the earliest Sunday-schools of London, establishing one in his own house. He was eminently a man of prayer, having that love for others' souls which led him to make exertions and sacrifices for them. His time, his talents, and his hard earnings, were liberally bestowed, and he never held back from any good he could perform.

Though despised, insulted, and pelted with filth by those he would have gladly served, he persevered in doing good to the wretched and abandoned. With a courage not to be daunted, and a perseverance that was not to be overcome, he entered the lodging-house and the jail on his errands of benevolence and mercy. He gave to others, while he himself suffered need; and contributed to the comfort of the distressed, when he wanted a blanket to his own bed. This was his course even to old age.

As he drew near his latter end, his soul ripening for glory, he increased in humility and spirituality of mind. "There was a power and sweetness in his conversation on the wonders of redeeming grace: a glow of delight seemed to animate his countenance as he testified his confidence in God, his trust in the promises, his love to the Saviour, his pantings after a conformity to His image, and his bright anticipations of that day when he should awake up altogether in His likeness. His heart seemed centred in heaven. On Tuesday, the 27th of November 1838, full of years, and abounding in patience, hope, faith, and love for the Redeemer, he fell asleep.

Thus died Thomas Cranfield, once the wicked and cruel boy; the hardened runaway apprentice; the reckless and hard-hearted soldier; but, by the grace of God, the affectionate, pious father; the zealous, persevering Sunday-school teacher; the eminently useful and devoted servant of God; and the humble and faithful follower of the Redeemer.

Reader! what has thy Saviour done for thee? and what art thou doing for His glory?

Digitized by Google

"Mighty to Save."



Digitized by Google

"Mighty to Save."



IGHTY to save! This is a description of the Saviour's power, which has been delightfully illustrated in a thousand ways. He has delivered many who were the chief of sinners from sin and condemnation; and He has imparted peace and joy to numbers who would otherwise have been overwhelmed with misery.

A few years ago, a youth, whom his heathen countrymen intended to offer in sacrifice to their idol goddess, and who would have been cruelly cut to pieces before life was extinct, was rescued, and placed in a missionary asylum. The Christian friends to whom he was delivered named him David, and sought to teach him the knowledge of Christ. He appeared, however, so sad, dull, and stupid, that they almost despaired of training him for any situation above that of sweeping the floors and yard. At length the Holy Spirit opened his heart to receive instruction: he became the subject of religious impressions, and now a great change took place in him. He seemed to start into a new state of being. None made more rapid progress in learning than he. The Scriptures became his delight, and he would spend hours in reading them. Appearing to be truly a convert to the Lord, he was baptized, and walked worthily of his profession. When he left the asylum he was employed in the mission printing-office.

Not long after this, his kind friends observed some white spots appearing on his dark skin. They knew that these were signs of leprosy—in his country a terrible disease; and as there would be no hope of cure if the disorder made much progress, they speedily sent him to a hospital. But human help was vain; thence he was sent back with an intimation that his case was hopeless, and all that could be done would be to smooth his passage to the grave. That other young persons on the mission premises might not catch the dreadful disease, a small building was prepared for poor David, where his wants were supplied, and where he lived alone, but was visited by Christian friends. Once the missionary and his wife paying him a visit, found the door ajar, and unperceived they came near. He lay on his mat, his Testament by his side, and his hymn-book on his breast, meditating on a hymn he had just been reading, of which the English version is—

"Of all that decks the field or bower,
Thou art the fairest, sweetest Flower;
Then, blessed Saviour, let not me
In Thy kind heart forgotten be.

Day after day youth's joys decay;
Death waits to seize his trembling prey:
Then, blessed Saviour, let not me
In Thy kind heart forgotten be."

In his great wretchedness the Saviour's love cheered him. His visitors prayed

Digitized by Google

with him, and on leaving him one of them remarked, "There lies an heir of glory!" Early the next morning the missionary was again at his cot. The door seemed as they left it the evening before. He entered it, and there David lay—his hymn-book on his breast and his Testament by his side; but his spirit had departed, and doubtless had been, like Lazarus, carried by angels to the Redeemer's bosom.

Reader, you need to experience His saving power. You are so entirely lost, that none but an almighty Saviour can deliver you; and to you, and to all, salvation is of infinite importance. The state of every man by nature is a state of utter ruin. The Scriptures declare that all men are so corrupt and depraved, that without a change so great as to be called a second birth, they cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. It describes all men as shapen in iniquity, and as transgressors from their birth; and affirms that all, in their natural condition, are undone, lost, guilty, condemned, the children of wrath, in subjection to Satan, and exposed to everlasting misery. Read with attention and prayer God's holy word, and you will find these humbling statements there.[1] The Lord Jesus came to seek and save those who are thus lost, and His salvation includes every blessing that an undone, but immortal soul can need. He saves from the heaviest load of guilt. He saves from the curse that sinks sinners to perdition. He saves from slavery to Satan, from his likeness, and his prison.[2] Thus He saves from hell, and all its fearful woes and direful despair; and those whom He has pardoned and justified He saves, by His preserving care, amidst the dangers and snares of this world—saves in the hour of death, and will crown with life and immortality in the kingdom of God.

When good so vast is at stake, it is a delightful fact that its Author is "mighty to save." He is mighty in His *Divine perfections*. Though in His human nature the Son of man, in His Divine He is one with God, the great God, the mighty God; over all, God blessed for ever. He formed, and He upholds the universe. Can He do this, and not be mighty to save?[1]

His saving power *continues unimpaired* from age to age, and is not weakened by the flight of centuries. To save one soul from eternal death and hell unto the bliss and life of the world to come, is a greater work than to save whole nations from famine and misery. But He saves multitudes which no man can number, and among them are sinners of every class. He has saved the licentious and dissolute, the self-righteous and the proud, the blasphemer and the infidel, the persecutor and the heathen; for whatever be men's guilt and misery, to Him it is equally easy to save. Many who are now in blessedness were once the chief of sinners; but they are washed, are sanctified, and are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Many that were weak in themselves were so upheld by Him who is mighty to save, as to pass cheerfully through a martyr's flames, and to win a martyr's crown. Lambert, in the flames into which the papists cast

[1] Psa. xiv. 2, 3; li. 5; Rom. iii. 9-20; Eph. ii. 1-3.
[2] John viii. 36; Col. i. 13.

[1] Col. i. 16, 17.

Digitized by Google

him, lifting his burning hands, said, "None but Christ! none but Christ!" Another sufferer kissed the stake, and exclaimed, "Welcome the cross of Christ! welcome everlasting life!" Anne Askew, an amiable young lady, when letters were brought her at the stake offering her the king's pardon if she would recant, refused even to look at them, telling the messenger she came not thither to deny her Lord and Master. Who but He that is "mighty to save" inspired these sufferers, and thousands more, with their triumphant firmness?

In the *efficacy of His atonement*, His saving power is manifest. He "obtained eternal redemption," and "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself,"[1] and the glorious company of the redeemed in glory have "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Earthly physicians find sufferers that their skill and medicines cannot benefit; but no diseases of the soul are beyond His skill. No load of guilt is too heavy for Him to remove, no heart too sinful for His Spirit to change.

His power to save is seen in the *greatness of the salvation* He gives. He rescues not only from common foes, and from transitory evils; but from the "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels;" from the horrors of their company, and from dispositions and characters hateful and hellish as theirs. Then He transforms those thus rescued into His own image, and translates them at length to His kingdom of glory. Behold a man, a sinner, with thousands of sins, every one of which deserves eternal death; a rebel against God; an enemy to Him, and thus a child of wrath, a bond-slave of Satan. But see this wretched creature saved by Christ. He is snatched as a brand from the burning; he is delivered from sin; is washed, sanctified, and justified; is renewed in heart by the Holy Ghost; is made a child of God, an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ.[1] All this is through the Saviour's grace. It is altogether His work; no works of man cause it. From the first devout desire of the anxious soul to the triumphant joy of the glorified saint, from the first tear of penitence to the final song of victory, the Saviour effects it all.

But still more gloriously will the Lord Jesus appear as "mighty to save" in *scenes that are yet to come*. When in His kingdom all His redeemed are gathered to Him, and He is admired in His saints, then will shine forth all the glory of His saving power. There will be seen innumerable multitudes; all sinners once, all then triumphant saints; all ruined once, then all safe for ever; all polluted once, then all without spot or blemish, or any such thing; and all owing their salvation, from first to last, to His dying love and living care. How great will our Immanuel then appear! How glorious in His power to save!

[1] Heb. ix. 12, 26.

[1] Rom. viii. 17

Digitized by Google

What will the End be?



Digitized by Google

What will the End be?

As I walk along the street, and see people busy and anxious, I often think, and say to myself, "Ah! what will your end be?" This remark was made by an old man, who, though not possessed of much of this world's learning, knew by shrewd observation, as well as by Christian experience, something of human character. "I have seen people," added he, "stooping to all sorts of meanness to scrape together a little money;—I have known others selfishly spending all on themselves, and keeping back from the poor: and what has it all come to? Why, they have been cut off, some in the midst of their selfishness, or others have been taken from their gettings, or they have not been able to enjoy them from one cause or another; and I have said to myself, 'Ah! this is the end of all evil doings!'"

The old man's observation is justly applicable to characters commonly met with. Take the youth who has despised parental authority, and laughed at a father's counsel or a mother's prayers. He associates with bad company; he keeps late hours; he frequents the theatre, the tavern, and, it may be, the gaming table. Observe his first temptation to deception—then to theft. At one time, conscience whispered that he was doing wrong, but he has at length contrived to stifle the warning voice. Could he have seen, a few months, or it may be years ago, the depth of crime into which the course he was commencing would lead him, he would perhaps have shrunk back with horror from the thought of entering upon it; but he went on, step by step, until he became hardened in sin. He is now dead to shame, lost to affection, breaking the commandments of God, and bringing sorrow and disgrace on his fond parents without remorse. What will his end be? "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

Look at the man of business who is wholly absorbed by traffic. Day follows day; month succeeds month; thus his years roll on, and still he is eager in pursuit of gain. See him behind his counter, full of energy, or in his counting-house deep in calculations. He is up early in the morning, and goes late to rest; sometimes he does not even cease from labour on the Sabbath, but devotes its sacred hours to making up his accounts. He seems to have no desires beyond the heaping up of wealth; he

Digitized by Google

lives only to get money. All his time, all his thoughts, all his strength, are devoted to the concerns of this life, and he makes no provision for the life which is to come. He is labouring hard for the riches which he can hold, at most, but a few short years, and is letting slip the riches which should be treasured up in heaven. He is saying, like the man in the parable, "I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods." But what if God should say to him, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Then think of the man of pleasure, who keeps up a forced gaiety by hurrying from one scene of amusement to another. He is to be seen on the race-course, at the theatre, or at the midnight revel;—there may be heard his loud laugh and frequent jest; but is he happy? When alone, he is spiritless and wretched. He cannot bear to be left to himself, for his reflections are painful. Memory is faithful, and will recall past follies, precious time wasted, and talents misused. He flies, therefore, to fresh scenes of excitement to rid himself of these thoughts, and, as he says, "to kill time." He may succeed in wearing the appearance of joy for a season; but what will the end be? "The end of those things is death."[1]

Mark also the man who laughs at Christianity as an idle tale; who despises the gospel, and contemns the believer in Christ as a silly fanatic. For a time he may boast of his self-sufficiency—for a season he may glory in his infidelity, and blaspheme the name of the Lord Jesus; but if he die in his unbelief, what will his end be? "He that believeth not the Son (of God) shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."[1]

Contemplate the man who is putting off religion until old age, or till he shall be stretched on his bed, ill or dying. He says it is time enough to be serious when he is getting grey. He does not deny the necessity of making preparation for eternity, but defers it till a more convenient season. He thinks that he should like God to be his friend when he is helpless, and can no longer take pleasure in worldly enjoyments, or when dying, and he has no other hope. But he will not come to Him until he is obliged; he will not serve Him so long as he can serve himself. What if this man should be cut off suddenly, without being allowed the space for the repentance he is depending on? What would his end be?

Consider likewise the state of those who, "being ignorant of God's righteousness," are "going about to establish their own righteousness."[2] Those who think to merit the kingdom of heaven by their good deeds; though God has, by His servant, declared, that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost,"[3] that it is also said, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any

[1] Rom. vi. 21.

[1] John iii. 36. [2] Rom. x. 3. [3] Titus iii. 5.

Digitized by Google

man should boast."[1] If the Bible, then, is true, as it most certainly is, these persons must be in error. If the word of God is to be believed, as it undoubtedly should be, they must be resting their hope on a false foundation. If Christ be a Saviour at all, as is the fact, He must be a perfect, all-sufficient Saviour. If, therefore, we are to be justified by faith in Christ, then those who are without Christ, or who are resting on anything short of His full atonement, must be without any well-grounded hope; and if "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,"[2] what will their end be?

Reader, weigh well the probable, nay, certain end of the course *you* are pursuing. You may readily come to a conclusion on this point; for the end of all things may be expressed in these words—happiness or misery—heaven or hell! The beginning of your career may be pleasant and promising: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Life is the beginning of your existence, but death is not the end of your being. Your body may soon be laid in the grave, and return "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust;" but you have a never-dying life—an accountable and immortal soul. Do you keep the interest of your soul in view, even amidst your temporal concerns, so that whilst fulfilling your earthly duties, your regard and your hopes are fixed on those things which are eternal? or are you going on in thoughtless unconcern as to its future well-being? Pause, and allow your conscience to answer faithfully: it will decide what, should you die in your present state, your end will be.

[1] Eph. ii. 8, 9. [2] Acts iv. 12.

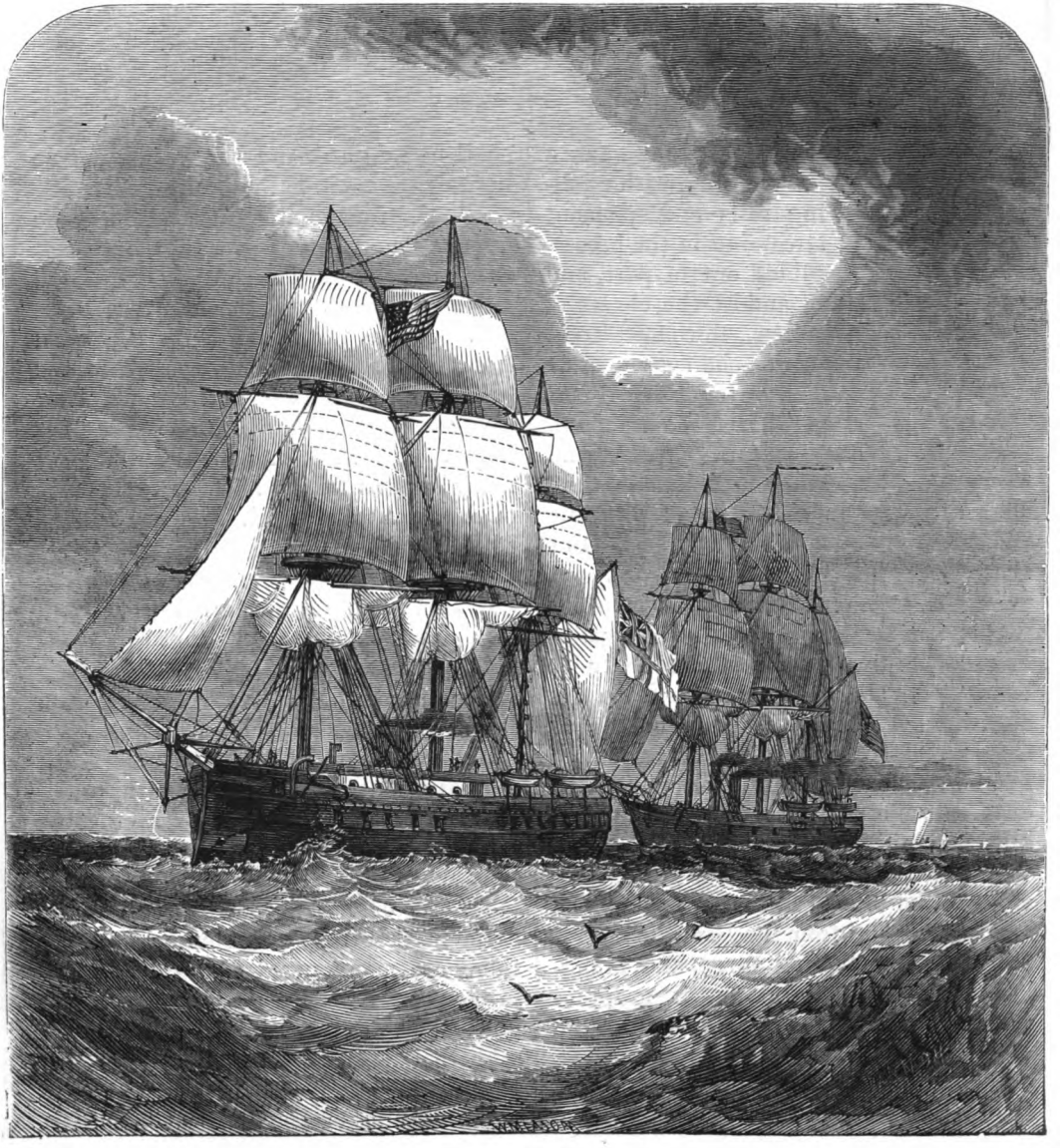
As you have read these pages, perhaps a still small voice has whispered that your own character has been given in one or other of those presented. If it should be so, do not turn a deaf ear to the warning voice; it is better that you should know the truth, though it be a painful truth, now, than that you should discover your danger when it is too late: "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts,"[1] for how will you escape, if you neglect so great salvation? "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."[2] Now the door of mercy is open, and you may come to Christ. Come now; come as you are. Do not wait to make yourself worthy; all your doings in your own strength are of no avail. Without Christ you can do nothing; you must come to Him as a sinner; for your sinfulness and conscious need of Him are the only pleas you can urge, or He will accept. Lay aside all self-dependence and self-righteousness, and come to Christ simply believing and trusting in Him, and your end shall be peace.

"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off."[3]

[1] Heb. iii. 15. [2] 2 Cor. vi. 2.
[3] Psa. xxxvii. 37, 38.

Digitized by Google

The Anchor of the Soul.



OUTWARD BOUND.

Digitized by Google

The Anchor of the Soul.



It is a noble sight when a gallant ship, with swelling sails and pennant streaming in the breeze, glides out of port, and when amidst the cheers of her crew, re-echoed from the shore, she speeds away on her voyage; her build strong, her shape beautiful, her captain skilful, and everything indicating that in due time she will return in safety, laden with the rich products of far-distant climes. But the vessel has not been long at sea, before a storm comes on. It is midnight; she is scudding under bare poles before the tempest; when suddenly is heard the cry of alarm, "Breakers ahead!" A lee-shore, with dangerous shoals and rocks, is at hand, and in a few minutes the beautiful ship must be dashed to pieces. What is to be done? Hark! amidst and above the roar of winds and waves is heard the calm, clear voice of the brave captain—"Let go the anchor!" And from the bows the anchor drops into the boiling surge, and plunging many a fathom down, it grapples with the sandy bottom. Instantly the vessel is arrested in her onward course, she swings round, and soon all fears for her safety pass away. A joyful hope now cheers every heart that when the storm abates and the morning dawns, the anchor shall be weighed, and the vessel pursue her voyage towards the desired port.

When an inspired apostle speaks of the hope of true believers in Christ, he calls it the "Anchor of the Soul,"[1] by which Hope and Anchor is meant Jesus Himself. Just as the anchor saves the vessel from destruction when exposed to the furious storm, so does the Divine Anchor save all, "who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon" it, from eternal ruin. But many persons fatally mistake the nature of the hope upon which they are resting as their anchor.

There are very few indeed of those who are in a state of alienation from God, who do not cherish a *hope* that they shall obtain everlasting life. But, alas! *their* hope is as a reed, "whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it;"[2] for we are assured that "when a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish,"[3] and "all the proud, ... and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."[4] Thus there are many persons who are living in constant rebellion against a just and holy God, despising His word, His sabbath, His sanctuary, and His people; and instead of walking in His ways, are taken captive of the devil at his will;

[1] Heb. vi. 19. [2] Isa. xxxvi. 6.
[3] Prov. xi. 7. [4] Mal. iv. 1.

Digitized by Google

and every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts is only evil continually;[1] and yet, when some alarming occurrence—such as a dangerous illness, or the sudden death of an acquaintance—terrifies their consciences for a moment and troubles them, they hush every fear with the hope that when a dying hour comes they shall seek and find mercy. This to multitudes has proved a "refuge of lies." Men generally die as they live. And if any man abuse the doctrine of Divine mercy as a licence to continue in sin, what can he expect but that while a false hope is whispering peace and safety, sudden destruction should come upon him, and that he should not escape?[2]

Others, again, are so blind to the nature of sin as the abominable thing which God hates, that, under the influence of their own deceitful hearts, they imagine that God cannot so strongly disapprove of the indulgence of appetites which He has implanted, and will never punish what they call their little failings with eternal woe. They thus insult God by supposing that He is such a one as themselves, and they make Him a liar, since He has expressly declared that "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God;" and that if men will not pluck out the right eye and cut off the right hand—that is, deny themselves to all unlawful and intemperate gratifications, they must be "cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."[3] If any reader of this tract is making a profession of godliness, and yet has only a mere name to live while he is dead, he may well tremble. You may have persuaded the world that you *have* laid hold of "the anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast," and may have sometimes succeeded in imposing on yourself; but your whole course has been *a living lie.* Your "hope shall be cut off," and your "trust shall be a spider's web."

Perhaps this tract may fall into the hand of some one who is like the Pharisee, and is saying in his heart, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers." You are trusting in yourself that you are righteous. You are resting on your constant attendance at public worship, your blameless and moral life, and your superiority in point of good conduct and reputation to most of your neighbours. But is not this a false hope? Are you not in effect going about to establish your own righteousness, instead of submitting to the righteousness of God? It is very plain from the Scriptures that there is but *one* way of salvation, and that is through the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.[1] But you expect to be saved by your own merits. Or perhaps you say, "Whatever is wanting in my obedience Christ will make it up;" which really means, "I shall do a part, and Christ shall do the rest." Be warned in time; Christ will not share His glory with another. He must either be a whole Saviour, or none. And if you will persist in refusing "the gift of righteousness,"—if you will continue to expect salvation, either from yourself or any other creature,—if you are too proud to come to the door of mercy as a poor, perishing sinner,—then be assured that

[1] Gen vi. 5 [2] 1 Thess. v. 3. [3] Mark ix. 45, 46.

[1] John xiv. 6; Rom. iii. 21-26.

Digitized by Google

when you pass into the presence of God, you will find *your* anchor not "sure and stedfast," but a vain hope which shall leave you exposed to "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."

What, then, is the true and only "Anchor of the Soul?" It is "Christ in you, the hope of glory,"[1] the result of justifying faith. Its reality is evidenced by "the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost;" and thus it is a "hope" that "maketh not ashamed."[2] Happy the soul that has such an anchor as this!—and such is the hope that animates the children of God, and can keep them in perfect peace under all their trials. They are like the ship at anchor which defies the tempest's fury; and therefore they can say:

"Roll on, ye waves, our souls defy
Your roaring to disturb our rest;
In vain to impair the calm ye try,
The calm in a believer's breast."

Yes! it is "the calm in a *believer's* breast," and in his alone. For faith is like the cable which unites the anchor to the ship. In vain we hope for salvation, except in God's own way. And those only who have believed "with the heart" "unto righteousness" can say in the confidence of a "sure and stedfast" hope, "We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." The Lord Jesus is "our hope," but it is only by "believing" that we "have life through His name." Reader! have you fled by faith to Jesus?

The Christian's Anchor is, indeed, "sure and stedfast;" for it is "within the veil."[1] Jesus "the Forerunner" has Himself "entered" there; and by His Holy Spirit He causes the soul which trusts in Him to fix itself firmly there. What a wonderful and blessed Anchor is this! Dear reader! be in earnest in seeking to have "Christ in you, the hope of glory,"—to have a "hope laid up for you in heaven." Seek to be filled "with all joy and peace in believing;" and thus you will "abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."[2] What are all the hopes of earthly blessing compared to this hope of glory? Oh, be persuaded to set your "affections on things above."[3]

"Amidst temptations sharp and long,
My soul to this dear refuge flies;
Hope is my anchor firm and strong,
While tempests blow and billows rise."

[1] Col. i. 27. [2] Rom. v. 5.

[1] Heb. vi. 19. [2] Rom. xv. 13. [3] Col. iii. 2.

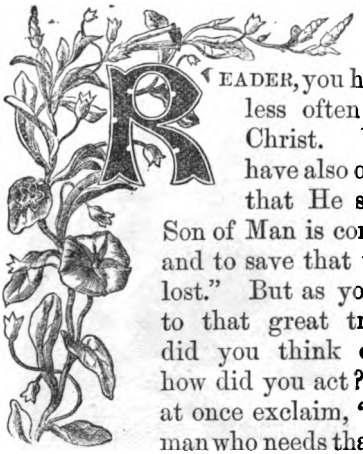
Digitized by Google

Christ, the Saviour of the Lost.



Digitized by Google

Christ, the Saviour of the Lost.



READER, you have doubtless often heard of Christ. You may have also often heard that He said, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." But as you listened to that great truth, what did you think of it, and how did you act? Did you at once exclaim, "I am the man who needs that Saviour; Lord, I believe: help Thou mine unbelief?" Or did you carelessly think within yourself, "Ah, well, then, I suppose if Christ died for sinners, I shall be saved by-and-by?" Was this the spirit in which you received the news, which of all other news most concerns the interests of your soul—those interests which have to do with your well-being not only in this life, but much more with your well-being throughout eternity? Can it be possible that you treated such a solemn truth, we do not say with levity, but with so little concern? Were it not for the daily proofs we have of the indifference of mankind, we should at once say that no one could hear of the great love of Christ towards a guilty world, without giving up all other hope but that which rests in Him, and in the spirit of repentance and faith, exclaiming with the dying thief, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."[1]

But did it never occur to you that before you *can* be saved through Christ, you must feel that you *need to be saved?* We know that Christ died for the ungodly; yet if ungodly men turn away, and by so doing say, "But we have no desire to be saved,"—what then? Will the fact that Christ died be of any use to them? How can it be? And, continuing thus, they will go into eternity without salvation, although a Saviour shed His blood for a guilty world; they will miss salvation and heaven, because they did not feel their want of Christ, but stayed away from Him, acting like some of old, to whom the Saviour Himself said, "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life."[2]

If we were to attempt to describe such characters, we might compare them to a man who had fallen into a stream leading to a deep and rushing cataract. At first the water runs gently onward, and gives but few signs of the awful depth towards which it is gradually but certainly hastening. He may seize on some floating log to hold him up, and be confident that he can reach the shore, in spite of the fall. But a kind friend on the shore thinks very differently. He fears the worst, and throws out a rope to the

[1] Luke xxiii. 42. [2] John v. 40.

Digitized by Google

swimmer, urging him to lay fast hold of it, that he may drag him out. "Let me alone, I am safe enough," cries the man. "Take care, take care!" cries the friend. "All right, no fear!" again replies the reckless swimmer. Already has the stream carried him on. He has not felt it,—but he goes on, and on, and on; while the cries of his friend, as he runs along the shore to keep pace with the strengthening stream, are heard louder and more terrific. The swimmer says, "I will try a little longer, and then if I fail I will snatch the rope." "Lay hold! lay hold!" "One more trial, and then I will." He tries,—and fails. Now he turns for the rope, but he cannot reach it. The stream is swifter. He is borne into the middle of it, and he is swept on with a force that nothing can stem. He is in despair. The falls are near. He hears their roar. The friend stands on the bank with his hands stretched out in speechless sorrow, but without power to help, and without hope: the wretched man is hurried down the fearful fall, and is lost! Of what use was the rope to this man, when *he would not lay hold of it?*

Numerous examples may be found in the histories of men to bear out this illustration. For instance: a young man, who had been carefully instructed in the knowledge of the gospel of Christ by the tender and prayerful efforts of a Christian mother, left the parental home, and went into the world to pursue his business, and to seek a fortune. But while diligent and industrious in business, he despised the apostolic precept, to be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." He put away thoughts of religion. He neglected the house of God, his Bible, and prayer. Association with evil companions completed the work of forgetfulness of God, and he was soon notorious as one of the gayest amongst the gay. He avowed what are called infidel opinions, and affected to overthrow by argument the doctrines of God's word. He lifted his voice against them at debating societies; and if any rebuked him for having gone too far, he only smiled to find himself famed among the champions of free-thinking. But he was cast down by affliction,—and his sickness was "unto death!"

Now, his infidelity proved a broken reed. His companions never came near to comfort him with the hope that there is no hereafter. They forsook him, and left him to the tender mercies of his accusing conscience, whose stings were fearful. But while conscience threatened, there was no sense of mercy to ease the tortures of his soul. No one could tell him more than he himself knew of the revelation of Christ. The prayers of his mother, long gone to her reward, came back upon him like a dream. What he had heard in days and years gone by he well remembered. What more could he know, or want to know? Alas! he had knowledge, but not faith and love. He knew, too, that he had despised the Saviour when he ought to have listened to His tender words of love. He had spurned the Spirit of God, when he ought to have opened his heart to receive Him. And now—now in his anguish, now in the end of his course—he saw not that Saviour nigh: but afar off. He died, crying, "I am lost!"

Reader! it is not for us to lift the veil

Digitized by Google

of futurity, or to judge; but these are the facts. Weigh them for yourself. Think of them, and ask, "What did it signify to this man that Christ had died, if he *would not accept* that Saviour? Alas! it would only increase his condemnation.

But, blessed be God! by His grace the "rope" is not always refused; the Saviour is not always rejected. A minister of the gospel was one day sent for to visit a young woman, who was supposed to be near death. He found her very ill, but able to converse without difficulty. Anxious to discover what hope she might have of eternal life, he began to inquire into her history, and then led the conversation to religion, and to her views on this subject. The result was that she considered herself moral, not worse than her neighbours; and she concluded by saying, "I believe God will accept me."

"Did you never hear of Christ?" asked the visitor.

"Yes, I *have* heard of Him."

"Then I came to speak to you of Christ, as One who came to save the lost: but I see you do not think yourself one of the lost, and therefore Christ will be nothing to you."

He left her. But his parting words remained, and they were words she could not forget. "What! did Christ come to save the lost, and do I mean that I am not one whom He can save?" And the Spirit of God was there to teach her more of herself than she had ever known before. The friend came again; but what a change he found in her!

"Oh! sir," she exclaimed, "I am one of the lost! I feel it now—I feel it indeed, now."

"Now let me tell you of Christ," said he. And that day she learned with gratitude how "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Many interviews afterwards took place with this dying young woman; at every visit she grew more earnest in her trust in Christ and love to Him,—and at last died saying, "I have found Him who came to save the lost." Reader, it is deserving of thought, how little worth the death of Christ would have been to this woman if she had not seen herself guilty, and as one who *had need of Christ.*

And have you never seriously thought of your need, as a sinner for whom Christ died? Are you content to stem the stream all alone—the stream that is hurrying you on, swiftly, surely, fatally, to your end? Or will you be satisfied to admit the fact of Christ's death, while at the same time you wrap yourself in the mantle of your own fancied excellences, and say, "God will accept me at last?" Nay, this is not wise. Never had Christ died, unless your wants had been so extreme that without His death you could never be forgiven. Never would God have made such a costly sacrifice as the life of His Son, except to provide a salvation for those who could never be saved without it.

Digitized by Google

What shall I carry with me into Eternity?



Digitized by Google

What shall I carry with me into Eternity?

The apostle declares, "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."[1] And this is true. We *feel* the truth of it. But let us consider for a moment what the Apostle Paul says about our entrance into this world, and our departure from it.

"We brought nothing into this world." A few years ago, we were not—we had no existence. The sun shone, but not upon us. The streets of our cities, towns, and villages, were trodden, but not by us. There were merchants and tradesmen, farmers and labourers, mechanics and operatives—but where were we? Where?—not in existence. But now we are in being; we live; we are numbered with the living; a record has been made of us as living creatures in the book of God's remembrance; angels and devils know that we are alive. We came into the world at different times and under different circumstances: some are poor, others rich; some are now young, others old; some have many comforts and much knowledge, and others are tried, and possess but little information. But none of us brought anything into the world. We were born helpless infants, and were thrown upon the care of parents and friends. In one sense we were altogether dependent on them for a continuance of the life which God had given us: for if they had not watched us, and been kind to us, we should have died nearly as soon as we were born. But how thankful soever we may be to them, we must remember God's kindness and love, and say with David, "By Thee have I been holden up from the womb."[1] And shall we not be thankful to the Lord of our lives? for all that we have of comforts or friends we owe to Him. The man that is now very rich, whose income, it may be, amounts to many thousands a-year, did not bring a sovereign, no, nor a farthing, with him into the world. And the good man, abounding in excellences and usefulness, did not bring with him the graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit, which now adorn and beautify his character.

Now the Apostle Paul says, "It is certain we can carry nothing out of the world." *We must go out.* Generations after generations have gone out before us, and we must go to make room for those who are to follow. *We* are under sentence. "It is appointed unto men once to die."[2] Death is no respecter of persons. The young and the old, the wealthy and the indigent, the learned and the illiterate, must all die. Princes and peasants, parents and children, masters and ser-

[1] 1 Tim. vi. 7.

[1] Psalm lxxi. 6. [2] Heb. ix. 27.

Digitized by Google

vants, must all die. Those who sow the fields and reap the harvests; those who tend on flocks and cultivate gardens; those who weave, make, and sell garments; those who build and furnish houses, must all die. Soldiers and sailors must die. Shopmen and shopwomen, clerks and apprentices, errand-boys and porters, must die. "We must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again."[1] But as we brought nothing with us, so when we die we must leave everything behind us. Speaking of the rich man, the Psalmist says, "Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him."[2] Whatever may be his possessions, he must, at death, part with them all. "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither."[3] I *must* die, and I *may* die soon. My earthly occupations and pursuits will soon come to an end. I am not far from my long home, and the last step of my journey to the grave will, when taken, separate me from time, and connect me with eternity. Houses, lands, riches, business, pleasures, I must give you all up—I can take none of you with me when I depart to another world. Should I not think, then, more about eternity and the concerns of my soul, and less about this life and the wants of the body?

But a very important question remains:—"Though no earthly possession can go with me into eternity, is there not anything else that can?" Yes! the character or state of my soul. For *what we are when we die, we shall be after death, and for ever.* It is not said, what we *have* when we die we shall possess after death; but what we *are* when we die we shall be after death. Character of soul makes the man. A man *is* just what this *character* is. A man and his possessions may, yea, must part; but a man and his character cannot part—they are one. The rich man, of whom we read in the sixteenth chapter of the Gospel by Luke, whilst he lived was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; but when he died he left his wealth behind him, and took his character with him. And every man that dies must retain throughout eternity all that essentially constitutes his soul's character at death. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; . . . and he that is holy, let him be holy still."[1] Solemn consideration! Die in sin, you are lost for ever. Die in Jesus, you are blessed for ever. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."[2]

Now let it be carefully noted how this affects those who die in an unconverted state.

1. Many of them would carry their earthly treasures with them if they could; but they cannot. A man's heart cleaves to his idols, and he cannot bear the thought of being cut off from all those things in which he has delighted. Judging from the attachments of some men, it would not be difficult for us to believe that if their will could be law, they would go on buying and selling and getting

[1] 2 Sam. xiv. 14. [2] Psalm xlix. 16, 17. [3] Job i. 21.

[1] Rev. xxii. 11. [2] Rom. vi. 23.

Digitized by Google

gain, and then either consume it upon their lusts, or hoard it in their coffers, for ever and ever.

2. Again: How many worldly persons, when they die, would be glad to leave some parts of their character behind them. But they cannot do this. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness,"[1] —not *from* his wickedness, but *in* it, in the midst of it, and his wickedness accompanies him. He does not altogether commit precisely the same sins after death that he does while alive; for some of the transgressions of which he is now guilty, are such as can be committed by him only while he is on earth. But though many of his habits are broken up and destroyed by death, the principles out of which these habits grew live after death; and he cannot annihilate these principles. Therefore,

3. An ungodly man must take his unholy nature with him into eternity. He cannot leave this behind; nor can he throw off a single fetter by which it is bound, nor wipe out a single blot by which it is disfigured, nor root out a single passion by which it has been polluted. The man dies; and the whole man, however depraved, lives again. Death makes no change in character. It does not, it cannot, regenerate the soul. So that he who leaves this world an enemy to God by wicked words, enters the next world as a rebel against Him and an alien from Him.

[1] Prov. xiv. 32.

Who, then, would not tremble at the idea of taking with him into eternity a benighted understanding, a rebellious will, an impure and unholy heart, a defiled imagination, and a memory stored with bitter recollections! Does not the reader dread this? Ask yourself the question, "What shall I carry with me into eternity?" and do not be misled by a false answer. The Bible alone can determine this question. Study the Bible. Pray over the Bible. Seek the teachings of God's Holy Spirit, that you may understand the Bible. Go, depending on God's grace, to that Saviour of whom the Bible testifies; rely on His atoning death, wash in His atoning blood, seek His sanctifying grace, submit to His justifying righteousness, and do this without a moment's delay. It will then be well with you for ever; for when you depart hence, all your infirmities and weaknesses will be cast away, and, with a new heart and a regenerated spirit, you will pass to heaven, there to enjoy the presence of God and of the Lamb, in a state of perfect purity, of undisturbed tranquillity, of unending joy.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Character is the only thing a man can take with him into eternity!

Digitized by Google

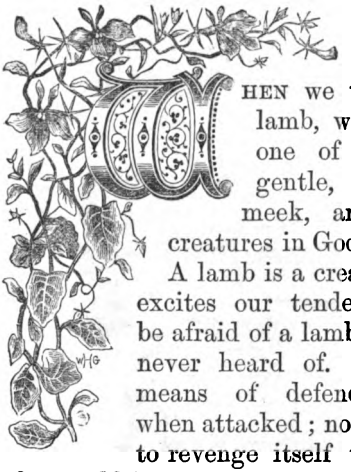
"The Wrath of the Lamb."



"JOHN SEETH JESUS COMING UNTO HIM, AND SAITH, BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD, WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD."—*John* i. 29.

Digitized by Google

"The Wrath of the Lamb."



When we think of a lamb, we think of one of the most gentle, harmless, meek, and patient creatures in God's creation. A lamb is a creature which excites our tenderness. To be afraid of a lamb, is a thing never heard of. It has no means of defending itself when attacked; no disposition to revenge itself upon those who would injure it.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ is called a Lamb, to show His meekness and patience under suffering: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth."[1]

It is true that a lamb is fearful and helpless, whereas Jesus is strong and mighty. All power in heaven and earth is His: "He is King of kings, and Lord of lords." Still, when we think of Jesus as a Lamb, we remember how He emptied Himself of all this power and majesty, when He took our nature upon Him. We think of one who was "meek and lowly in heart." We remember the kind and loving words He addressed to poor sinners when He was upon earth. We think of the cruel treatment He received, the unkind words which were spoken against Him, and the hard thoughts which so many had of Him, and the evil names they gave Him, and how gently He replied, and how patiently He bore all; and how He answered not a word when His enemies accused Him, though He might have struck their lying lips dumb; and when they buffeted Him, and fixed Him with nails to the accursed tree, He might have destroyed them in a moment, for He had power to do it. And then, when we think of Jesus as a Lamb, we call to mind His tenderness, and long-suffering, and love: and how that love is shown *now*, even towards those who slight Him and despise Him. Hear His own gracious and loving words: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."[1]

Jesus Christ is also represented as a Lamb in another and a very important respect. Before He came into the world, He was set forth by God Himself in sacrifices; that is, animals appointed to be slain and offered up, to represent His great sacrifice of Himself, when He was offered in the sinner's stead, to die upon the cross.

Among these sacrifices, a lamb was the animal most frequently offered. It was probably a lamb which Abel offered to God.[2] It was a lamb which the children of Israel were commanded to kill, and whose blood they were to sprinkle upon

[1] Isa. liii. 7.

[1] Matt. xi. 28; John vi. 37 [2] Gen. iv. 4.

Digitized by Google

their door-posts, so that the angel who was commanded to destroy the first-born of the Egyptians might pass over them.[1] A lamb was ordained to be offered morning and evening, from the time of Moses until the death of Christ,[2] when all sacrifices ceased.

And it was in reference to this, that John the Baptist pointed to Jesus, when He first appeared among men, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

What then can these words mean: "THE WRATH OF THE LAMB?" It is indeed an awful expression! Oh that the reader, whoever he may be, would give heed to it!

Will you turn to Mark xv. 31, and Luke xxiii. 35? See Jesus hanging on the cross. His enemies scoffed at Him, saying, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." There was this Lamb of God—nailed to the cross: as man perfectly helpless, in the hands of His enemies: and in this helpless state He continued, until "He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost." Yet why could He not save Himself? Wondrous reason! that He might save us! As our Surety, He had undertaken the great work of love—to die for the salvation of sinners, and He would not turn back from it till He could say, "It is finished."

Now turn to the passage whence the title of this little paper is taken.[3] Here you read of "the wrath of the Lamb." In that day all His patience and gentleness will be swallowed up in wrath, tremendous and eternal; His helpless condition will have passed away; His wrath will be clothed with almighty power: so that all "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, shall hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and shall say to the mountains and the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Yes, fellow-sinner, there is the "day of the wrath of the Lamb." You shall see Him in that day, for "every eye shall see Him," but shall you be able to stand? Turn to 2 Thess. i. 7–9: there read, that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." Now, if you are unconverted, or, in other words, if you have not beheld the Lamb of God by faith, so as to be saved by Him, here in this passage which you have just read is your character drawn to the life: "You know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"You know not God!" This is startling. "What!" you say, "am I a heathen?" Indeed, if you are living "without God in the world," there is but little difference between you and a heathen *in character;* and inasmuch as your light is greater, so your guilt is greater, and your doom will be heavier than that of the heathen. You may have been well instructed in the Scriptures. You may have had pious

[1] Exod. xii. 1–13. [2] Numb. xxviii. 3, 4. [3] Rev. vi. 16.

Digitized by Google

parents, and great religious advantages—much knowledge—much understanding of the Bible. Yet, if the truth has not entered your *heart;* if you have not known Jesus Christ as the way to God; if your life is still unchanged—unrenewed, this is your character: "You know not God."

Again,—"that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." *The gospel.* What is it?—The glad tidings of reconciliation and peace for guilty, lost, ruined man, with his offended, yet most gracious God—the proclamation of a free pardon for rebels, through the sufferings and death of God's dear Son—the way by which polluted, defiled sinners can be washed, sanctified, and made meet to serve God here, and to dwell in His glorious presence in heaven for ever. This gospel is *everything* to you—the only thing which can separate between you and hell: it reveals the one only way to heaven. But remember this gospel is not only to be read, heard, talked about, but *obeyed:* it is, "according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for *the obedience of faith.*"[1]

Now do you thus "know God, and obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ?" or does your conscience bear witness that you have lived altogether unmindful of your precious soul, altogether without preparation for eternity?

[1] Rom. xvi. 26.

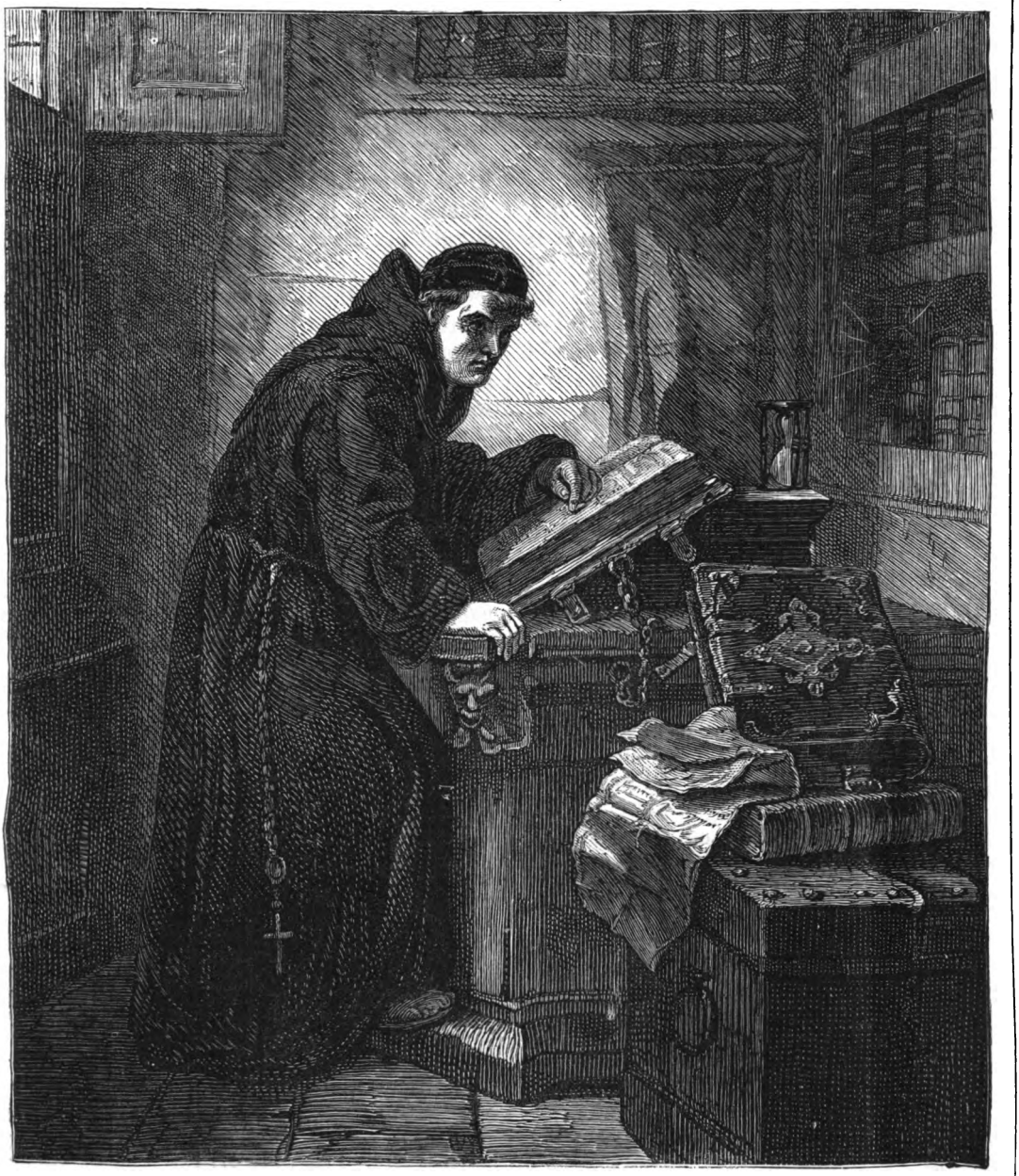
Is it not time, then, to come to a point? Perhaps you may cast your eye over this paper, as you have done over like appeals, or over the pages of your Bible, and lay it down, and think no more of it. Or, perhaps, it may produce a serious thought or two; and you will, as you may have often done before, determine to be more religious. And yet, before to-morrow comes, your goodness, like the early dew, will have passed away. Nothing but the *real* gospel, believed, loved, obeyed, through the power of the Holy Spirit, will turn your heart fully to God and to heaven. We direct you, therefore, to this Lamb of God. This Lamb, once a sacrifice, is now an Intercessor. He stands "in the midst of the throne, . . . as He had been slain,"[1] pointing, as it were, to His wounds—pleading His sacrifice, in the very presence of God—our Propitiation, our Mediator, our Advocate.

But, should you go on trifling with His love, neglecting His salvation, "the accepted time, the day of salvation," will have passed away. You will then hear only of "the wrath of the Lamb." His blood will plead no longer. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."[2]

[1] Rev. v. 6. [2] Heb. x. 26, 27.

Digitized by Google

Why should I Study the Bible?



Digitized by Google

Why should I Study the Bible?



ECAUSE it is the *word of God, my best Friend,* and the study of it is enjoined by Him. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." "Therefore shall ye lay up these My words in your heart, and in your soul." "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me." [1]

2. Because of *its wonderful and perfect character.* "Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them." "Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword; piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." "The word of the Lord endureth for ever." [2]

3. Because of *its gracious design and tendency.* "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.... More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is Thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward." "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." "Which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." [1]

4. Because it is *necessary to my spiritual nourishment and stability.* "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." [2]

5. Because it will *enlighten my mind.* "The commandment is a lamp; and the

[1] 2 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Pet. i. 21. Deut. xi. 18. Isa. viii. 20. John v. 39.
[2] Psa. cxix. 129. Isa. xxv. 1. Heb. iv. 12. 1 Pet. i. 25.

[1] Psa. xix. 7, 10, 11. Rom. xv. 4. 2 Tim. iii. 15.
[2] Matt. iv. 4. Eph. vi. 16, 17; iv. 14, 15.

Digitized by Google

law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life." "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all." [1]

6. Because it will *preserve me from sin.* "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy word.... Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." "Concerning the works of men, by the word of Thy lips have I kept me from the paths of the destroyer." "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth." [2]

7. Because it will *cheer my soul in affliction and death.* "In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul." "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.... Unless Thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction." "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." [3]

8. Because it will *promote my eternal welfare.* "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." "Our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." [4]

9. Because *the neglect of it will subject me to God's righteous condemnation.* "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven." "For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels." [1]

If you are convinced that you should study the Scriptures, you will be anxious to inquire,

HOW SHOULD I STUDY THE BIBLE?

Dependently.—"Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go." "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

Prayerfully.—"Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.... Give me understanding, and I shall keep Thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart."

Constantly.—"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then shalt thou make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

Meekly.—"As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." "Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."

Retentively.—"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart." [2] "Receive, I pray thee, the

[1] Prov. vi. 23. Psa. cxix. 130. 1 Tim. iv. 15.
[2] Psa. cxix. 9, 11; xvii. 4. John xvii. 17.
[3] Psa. xciv. 19; cxix. 54, 92; xxiii. 4.
[4] John vi. 68. 2 Tim. i. 10.

[1] Heb. xii. 25. Luke ix. 26.
[2] Isa. xlviii. 17. 1 Cor. ii. 10. Psa. cxix. 18, 34. Josh. i. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 2. James i. 21. Deut. vi. 6.

Digitized by Google

law from His mouth, and lay up His words in thine heart." "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom."

Practically.—"Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. . . . For whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."[1]

EXAMPLES OF REGARD TO THE BIBLE.

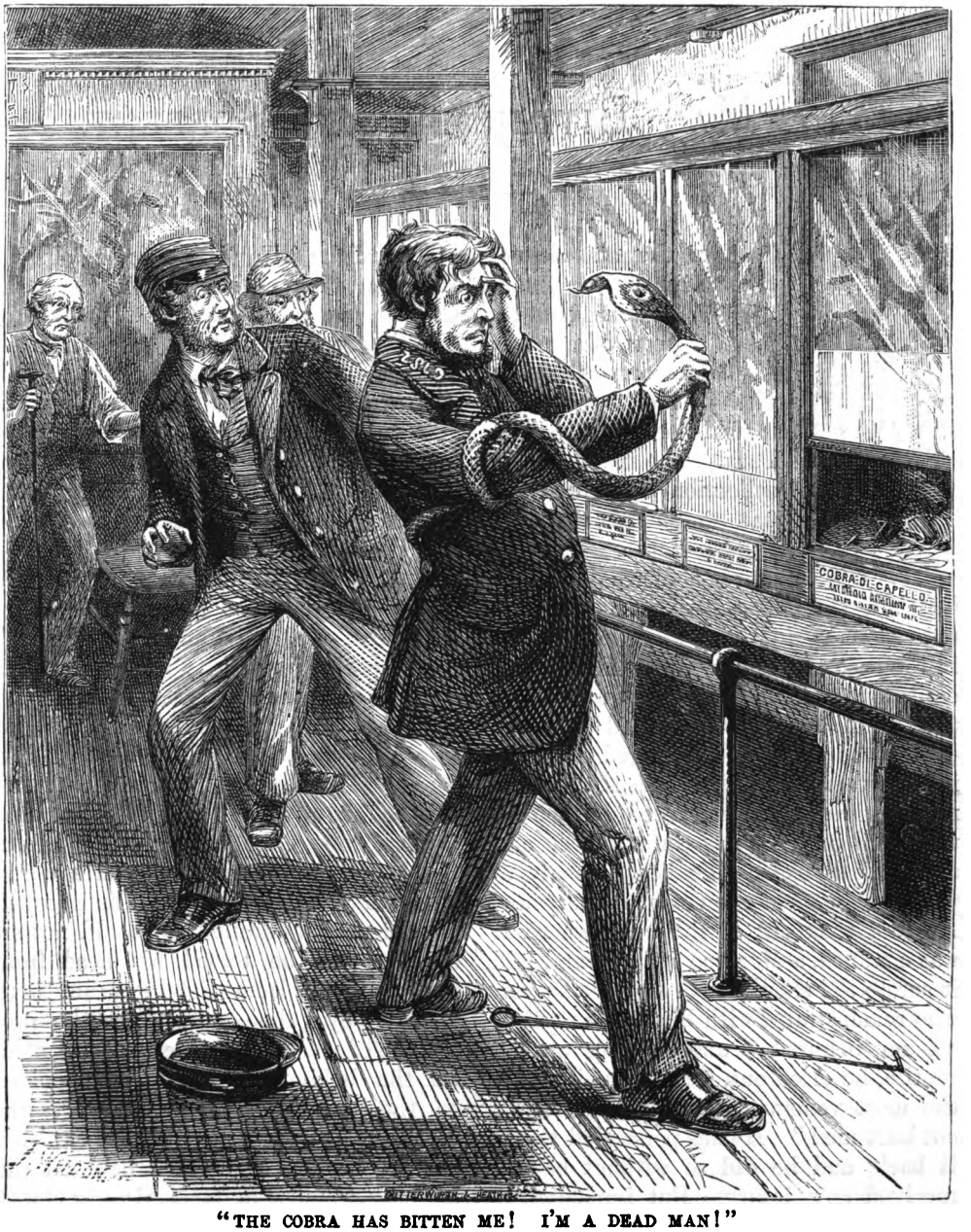
Jerome said, he never went to meals without some part of the Scriptures being read—never to sleep till some about him had read them to him. Luther gave himself with great ardour to the study of the Scriptures. Bishop Ridley says, "The wall and trees of my orchard, could they speak, would bear witness that there I learned by heart almost all the Epistles; of which study, although in time a greater part was lost, yet the sweet savour thereof, I trust, I shall carry with me to heaven." The Hon. and Rev. W. B. Cadogan, who studied the Bible day and night in the original languages, said, "I have no patience now to read Homer, Virgil, or Horace, whom I used to idolise." The Rev. James Harvey said, "We fail in our duty and thwart our comfort, by studying God's holy word no more. I have, for my part, been too fond of reading everything elegant and valuable that has been penned in our own language; and been particularly charmed with the historians, orators, and poets of antiquity. But were I to renew my studies, I would sit at my Divine Master's feet, and desire to know nothing but Jesus and Him crucified. This wisdom, whose fruits are peace in life, consolation in death, and everlasting salvation after death, I would trace—this I would seek, this I would explore, through the spacious and delightful fields of the Old and New Testament."

Reader, love, and search, and study the sacred Scriptures; then you shall feel the quickening, enlightening, and comforting influence of the truth in your own mind, through the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Then shall Christ be exceedingly precious to you, all your salvation, and your joy: you will love Him much who loved you, and gave Himself for you, and now ever lives to make intercession for you. Then you will grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ the Lord. Then you will stand fast in the truth. Above all, then you will be preparing for those blessed mansions which Christ provides for His people, where you shall see face to face, and know even as you are known.

[1] Job xxii. 22. Col. iii. 16. James i. 22, 25.

Digitized by Google

THE MAN BITTEN BY THE SERPENT.



"THE COBRA HAS BITTEN ME! I'M A DEAD MAN!"

Digitized by Google

The Man Bitten by the Serpent.

In the autumn of 1851, a man, about thirty years of age, was taken into the service of the Royal Zoological Society, Regent's Park. The part of the collection in which he was employed was the Reptile-house. On the evening of the 19th of October, 1852, he asked another keeper to accompany him on a visit to a friend in the east of London, who was about to emigrate to Australia. Instead of returning home, they remained together during the night, and indulged in drinking in various public-houses. In the morning the man presented himself in the gardens partially intoxicated, and about eight o'clock he began rashly to play with some of the venomous serpents. He first took out of the case, where it was confined, a Morocco serpent, and laid it across the shoulders of another keeper, who remonstrated with him. He replied, "I am inspired;" and holding up the reptile, he cried out, "See, here is one of the most venomous serpents, but it will not hurt me!" He was persuaded to put it back, and he did so without having received any injury. But immediately afterwards he said, "Now for the Cobra!" He then took up an Indian Cobra da Capello, the most deadly in its bite of all the serpent tribe. He permitted it to coil itself around his waist, and then grasping it round the body, within about a foot of the head, he drew it up in front of his person. The creature made a sudden dart at his face, and inflicted a number of small punctured wounds on the upper part of the nose.

The poor man was now thoroughly alarmed, and exclaimed, "The Cobra has bitten me, and I am a dead man!" For a period of twenty minutes he was able to walk and speak as usual; but after that time the muscles of the limbs, as well as of the mouth, began to be convulsed. He was placed in a carriage, and on his way to the hospital of University College he grew rapidly worse. On his arrival he was speechless and insensible, his face was livid, he grasped his throat and moaned, he could not sit upright, and he tossed his head from side to side. Immediately means were adopted, by galvanism and by the production of artificial respiration, to counteract the influence of the deadly poison on the system. But every effort was useless, and in a short time he expired. An inquest was afterwards held on the body, at which the facts already stated

Digitized by Google

were elicited, and the jury returned the verdict, that "the deceased had lost his life by the bite of a serpent known as the Cobra da Capello, when in a state of intoxication, and in consequence of his own rashness and indiscretion."

This was indeed a lamentable case, the particulars of which cannot be read without mingled feelings of pity and horror. Here was a man suddenly cut off in the prime of life, his wife made a widow, and his soul hurried into eternity. But, alas! is not the cause of all this painfully apparent? Does not the case remind us very forcibly of the *fatal consequences of the sin of intemperance?* It was under the excitement of drink that he took up and handled the venomous serpent which destroyed him. And how many perish prematurely from the prevailing habits of drinking, especially among the working classes! It is not all at once that a man becomes a drunkard. The appetite which at length is so irresistible in its cravings is gradually formed. No sin is more terrible than intemperance in the destruction of character and property, as well as of health and life; while it also ruins the immortal soul. It is expressly declared that "drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God," and thus this sin "*at the last biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.*"[1]

When the man took up the serpents and played with them, it was under the idea that *there was no danger.* Is the reader one who is rashly trifling with temptation, and saying in his heart, "There is no great harm in sin?" We would ask, Is your danger really less on that account? Are you not listening to the father of lies, who said to our first parents, "Ye shall not surely die?" Are you not forgetting that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die?" and, by such thoughts, making "God a liar?"

This man was emboldened in his folly by having *handled one serpent without injury.* And because you have hitherto escaped without punishment, do you think that you can go on in a course of wickedness with impunity? Alas! it is thus with many. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil." But "the wages of sin is death;" and although God is "slow to anger," yet of the transgressors of His law it is written, that "when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them," and that "they shall not escape."[1]

When the fatal wound was inflicted, we find that the man, in great agitation and alarm, implored one of his companions to run for help. But it was too late. His duty was to have avoided the peril; but, in spite of warning, he persisted in his rashness, and lost his life. And so there is peculiar and aggravated guilt in sinning against light. Dear reader, beware lest this should be the case with you, and lest God should at length say of you, "He is joined to idols: let him alone."

The writer is well acquainted with a faithful servant of Christ, who was once a careless sinner, whose conversion was, through grace, the result of his hearing a sermon on the solemn words, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." Dear reader, ponder them well, and

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 10; Prov. xxiii. 32.

[1] Eccles. viii. 11; Rom. vi. 23; 1 Thess. v. 3.

Digitized by Google

"Quench not the Spirit." "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."[1]

This unhappy man's death arose from the *infusion of the deadly venom of a serpent into his veins, whose nature is to poison and destroy.* Sin is a poison still more destructive. Yes! man's nature is now entirely corrupted and depraved. "Behold," says David, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." "The heart," says the prophet, "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." And thus it is that over our race "sin reigns unto death," for that all men are "dead in trespasses and sins," and the awful effect of the poison of sin is the destruction of "soul and body in hell."

This Messenger comes to tell every reader of it of *a remedy for the deadly poison of sin.* When the Israelites were wounded by the fiery serpents, and "much people died," they said to Moses, "We have sinned, . . . pray unto the Lord, that He take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. . . . And it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."[2]

And now there is another and better Mediator than Moses, "able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession." "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."[1] Come then, confessing your guilt, to the foot of the cross: and "behold the Lamb of God." The gospel proclaims a remedy for the poison of sin which is certain, for it is God's appointed means of healing. Do not, then, quarrel with its simplicity, nor yet give way to despair. "They," says an old writer, "that looked upon their sores, and not upon the sign, died for it; and those that looked upon the sign, though with but half an eye, were presently healed. So they that fix their eye upon their sins only, and not upon their Saviour, despair and die. But those that look to Christ, being faithful in weakness, though weak in faith, are sure to be saved. Only look up, as they did who were wounded, weepingly, wishingly, pitifully, cravingly; see and sigh; look upon Him whom you have pierced; LOOK AND LIVE! For thus said the Lord, 'LOOK UNTO ME, AND BE YE SAVED!' 'THIS IS THE WILL OF HIM THAT SENT ME, THAT EVERY ONE WHICH SEETH THE SON, AND BELIEVETH ON HIM, MAY HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE: AND I WILL RAISE HIM UP AT THE LAST DAY.'"

1 Thess. v. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 2. [2] Numb. xxi. 7–9.

[1] John iii. 15.

Digitized by Google

THE DOOMED VILLAGE.



THEY LIVE IN THEIR DOOMED DWELLINGS FROM YEAR TO YEAR.

Digitized by Google

THE DOOMED VILLAGE.



THERE is, in a canton of Switzerland, called the Grisons, a village situated on the slope of one of the Alpine ranges, where the strata of the mountain on which it is built shelve in the direction of the place. Huge crags, directly overhanging the village, and vast enough, if entirely loosened from the soil, to sweep the whole into the torrent below, have become to a great extent separated from the main body of the mountain by great fissures, and now scarcely adhere to its sides. When these crags give way, the village must be crushed, and buried in ruins; its destruction is only a question of time, and there is not an hour of the day or night when the event might not happen. It has been usual for many years to send engineers there from time to time to measure the width of the fissures; and their report has always been that these chasms have been growing wider. The villagers, for more than one generation, have been fully aware of their danger, and so great has been the interest excited by their perilous position, that subscriptions have been once or twice opened in the Swiss Cantons and in Germany, to enable them to remove. Yet, wonderful to tell, they live in their doomed dwellings from year to year, ever putting off the time of their departure. They fortify themselves against the destruction which seems sure to come at last, and may be any day, by the common sentiment that "things may last their time, and longer."

We need not pause to inquire into the wisdom or folly of this course of proceeding, on the part of these Swiss villagers. Every thinking man will pronounce their conduct to be not only foolish, but mad. That rational beings should thus risk their lives from hour to hour, when they might, without much sacrifice of time or trouble, secure to themselves a place of safety, must surely excite amazement.

But if we inquire further, we shall find that it is not an unusual thing for men—ay, for men who count themselves wise—to act on the very same principle which prevents the escape of these inhabitants of the Grisons. Things continue so precisely as they have ever been, that men work themselves into the belief that no change will ever come. Thus they are told of a time which is steadily drawing nearer, and which any hour of the day may usher in, "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence

Digitized by Google

of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."

And what is the reply they give to this truth—a reply, perhaps, not shaped in so many words, but at least shown by their conduct? They ask, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." They see no visible change in the face of nature; there are the same returns of day and night, seedtime and harvest; there are no signs in the heaven or in the earth; no gathering clouds to tell of the coming storm; and as it has been, so do they think it will ever be. And when friends, who are conscious of their danger, and see the gulf ever widening which separates them from heaven, and behold the likelihood of their safety always growing less, beseech them to "escape for their life," their warnings are disregarded.

This was just the case with the men of old times, when "the earth was filled with violence," and "all flesh had corrupted his way." During a long course of years, Noah warned them of the coming deluge, and besought them to "flee from the wrath to come;" but they would not listen to "the preacher of righteousness," and no doubt threw scorn and ridicule on his efforts to "build an ark for the saving of his house." "All things continued as they were." The sky was bright above; the earth was fair beneath. Why should there be any alarm? Let the old man toil at his fruitless work; they will be wiser, and follow the bent of their own desires, and give themselves up as usual to their pleasures. So "they did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage," until the rain came down, and the flood rolled on in its dread and desolating career. Onward it went, without stop or pause—onward, carrying the despairing scorners along, and sweeping them away to destruction. The cloud which threatened had at last burst; and the ark alone rode in safety over the wide waste of waters which covered a buried world.

So again with regard to the cities of the plain. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah had doubtless heard of a judgment to come; they were aware that there is a "God that judgeth in the earth," but because the Lord was long-suffering, they imagined that He was "slack concerning His promise." They were tempted to believe that the time of His forbearance would never come to an end. He kept silence, and they thought that He was altogether such an one as themselves. Yet Lot had often warned them to flee from the approaching ruin. He had testified against their wickedness, and, knowing the "terror of the Lord," had sought to persuade them. But they would not believe. "All things continued as they were." There were no traces of the coming ruin in the heaven above, or in the earth beneath. Their fathers lived and died in their cities, and "things would last their time, and longer." So they went on indulging their sinful desires, giving the rein to those vile and "fleshly lusts which war against the soul," and abandoning body and soul to most lawless and abominable riot. But at length the bolt descended. "The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar." And now fell the long-suspended judgment: terrible and inexorable it came; proving

Digitized by Google

that though God "waiteth to be gracious," He will "not at all acquit the wicked." "The Lord rained fire and brimstone from heaven." The burning shower consumed and withered up the transgressors, and the torrent rolled on, till the whole plain became a sea of flame, "the smoke of which went up as the smoke of a furnace."

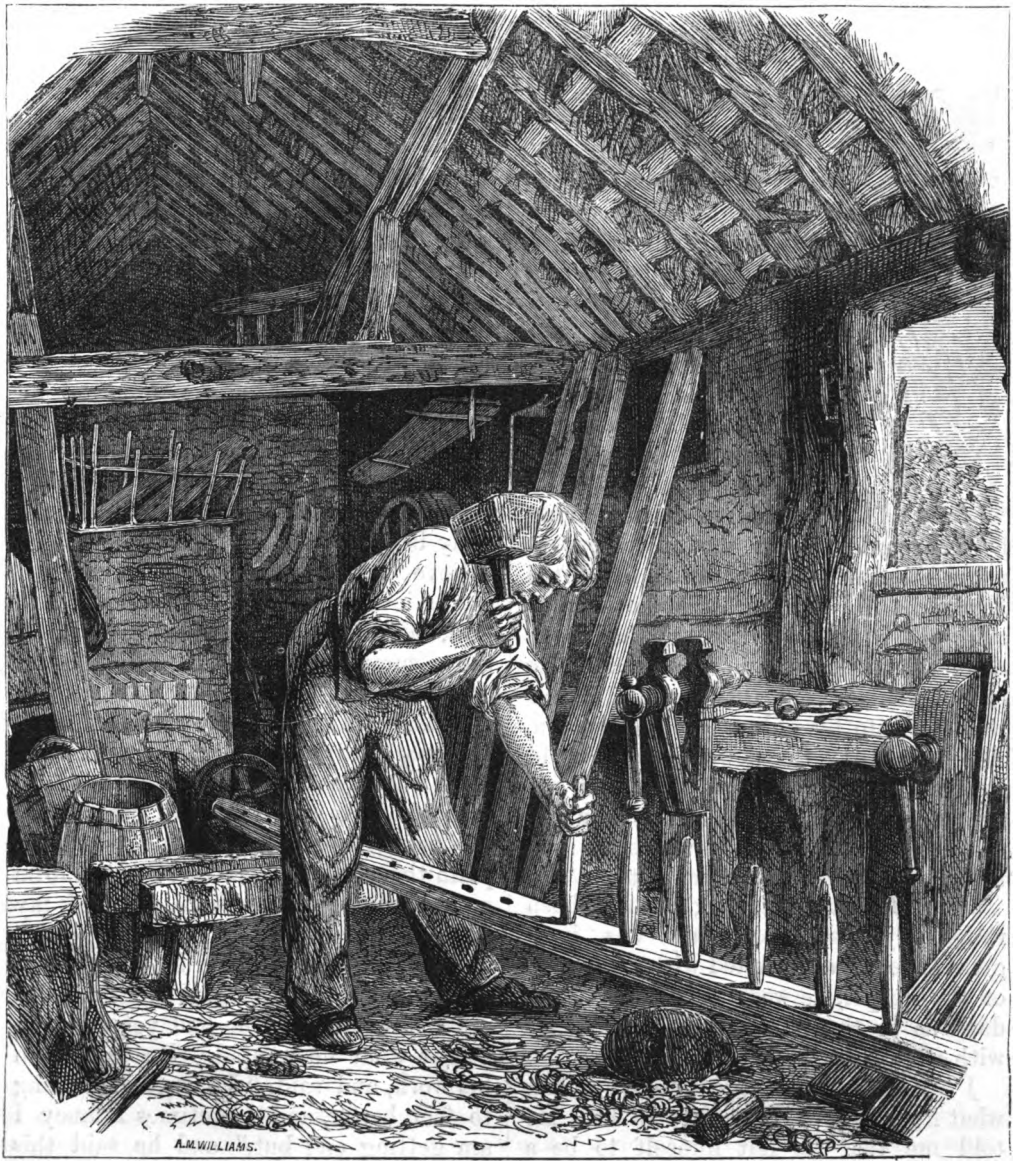
So will it ever be. Judgment, though long suspended, will inevitably descend. The hand, though long reluctant to strike, will smite at last. Reader! "as it was in the days of Noah," and "as it was in the days of Lot,—so shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed." Men will eat and drink, buy and sell, plant and build, even to the last moment; and then, in the midst of their vain revelry and godless mirth, "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Ay, be assured of this, "When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."

Are you safe? Have you made your escape from the impending ruin? Have you "fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before you in the gospel?" Remember, the day is coming which "shall burn as an oven." The Lord has said it. It will come, that day, that appalling day, when "a fire shall be kindled in God's consuming anger, which shall burn unto the lowest hell." And will you not prepare against its terrors? Will you not provide yourself a shelter against its approach? Have you no thought, no sense, no feeling? Will you strive to lull conscience asleep? Will you seek to get rid of the warnings of those who would pluck you as "a brand from the burning," by calling them the fears of superstition, or the visions of a dreaming mind? Will you say, like the inhabitants of the doomed village, "These present things will last our time, and longer?" Will you exclaim, "All things continue as they were?" Oh, beware how you tempt the Lord your God. He is a righteous Judge, and though He now stretches forth His hands to you, and beseeches you to be reconciled, yet His "Spirit will not always strive with man," and He will at length award the punishment which He has threatened.

What then shall you do to be saved? Oh, do you ask? The answer of the Word of God is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." But you are unholy, and without holiness "no man shall see the Lord." Is this your thought? Then come to Christ, cast your sins upon Him; and He will not only free you from the guilt of sin by the cleansing of His most precious blood, but He will also free you from its power by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Come, I say, to Christ. Come in faith, come with prayer. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

Digitized by Google

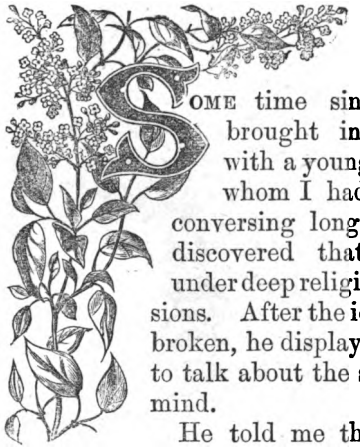
Trying to Feel Better.



ALONE IN THE WORKSHOP.

Digitized by Google

Trying to Feel Better.



Some time since I was brought into contact with a young man with whom I had not been conversing long, before I discovered that he was under deep religious impressions. After the ice was once broken, he displayed anxiety to talk about the state of his mind.

He told me that, having been brought up in the enjoyment of many religious advantages, he had often been painfully convinced that he was pursuing a dangerous course, and had been more than once, "almost persuaded to be a Christian," but that he had always relapsed into his old state of unconcern. And now that "the powers of the world to come" bore upon him again with unwonted influence, he was greatly troubled on account of the way in which he had trifled with these earlier convictions.

I soon found that, though he had been religiously brought up, and was, in a general sense, acquainted with the truths of the gospel, he was lamentably in the dark as to the true way of acceptance with God.

I asked him to tell me, in a few words, what he conceived his state to be. He told me that he felt himself to be a sinner; that he was utterly wretched, disturbed by day, and terrified by night; and that he desired, above all things, to know that peace of mind of which he had heard Christians talk, but to which he himself was an utter stranger. I explained to him that the only way to secure this peace was to believe in the testimony which God gave concerning His Son. Whereupon he assured me that he did believe, and yet could not find "peace and joy in believing." I endeavoured to convince him that he did not truly believe in Christ; that he might believe Christ to be *a* Saviour, and yet not believe Christ to be *his* Saviour; and that, *before* believing, he was looking for the assurance of salvation which could only flow *from* believing

After some further conversation, I knelt and prayed with him; and, having marked down a few passages of Scripture, which exhibit in its freedom and fulness the pardoning love of God, and clearly explain the plan of salvation, I urged him prayerfully to peruse them, and took my leave.

A few weeks afterwards, seeing him alone in his workshop, I went in and asked him whether he had yet found in Christ what he wanted. He paused in his work, and said, "I have been trying to feel better, and sometimes I fancy I am getting on; but," and he said this with a sigh of disappointment and weari-

Digitized by Google

ness, "I am just as far from peace of mind as when you spoke to me last."

I said, "You are beginning at the wrong end. You will never get what you want by 'trying to feel better;' you can't feel better by trying to do so. Something must occur to change you for the better, and then you will feel better without trying. Suppose that you were hungry, and that you sat down near a table on which was a loaf of bread. You look at it, and say, 'I believe that is bread; I have no doubt that it is a genuine loaf. I believe what people tell me, that bread will cure the pangs of hunger. I believe all this, but somehow I do not feel any better for believing this. I have been 'trying to feel better, but I don't.' And one would reply, 'No, nor will you, until your belief leads you to make use of the bread. Eat, and you shall have the feeling of satisfaction; it comes from eating, and it comes in no other way.'

"Just so as regards your soul. You have been looking at Christ. You have said, 'I believe him to be a Saviour; I believe what God's Word and Christian people say concerning Him and His work, but I know nothing of the feeling of peace of which they speak.' And the cause is, that you have never yet so believed as to make use of Christ for yourself; you have never learned yet to turn the third person into the first, and say, 'He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*.'"

He listened in silence, but I saw that his silence was not that of perfect acquiescence, that he did not see his way so clearly as he and I desired. And so I continued:

"You want to feel better, to experience a change which you believe to be necessary, but which, as yet, you only know by hearsay; it is your desire to attain a comfort and satisfaction of mind which you do not now possess. You have sought all this in your own way; you have been putting a constraint upon yourself; you have sought to force your feelings into a new and better channel. You have tried to make yourself feel right towards God; and you have failed, endeavouring to do what you never can do. Without thinking of it, you have been going about to establish a righteousness of your own, and, by repeated and painful failures, God has been shutting you up to the righteousness of Christ. See, now, how *all* that you have been vainly and painfully striving after in your own way comes to us simply, naturally, without constraint, *in God's way*, as a *free gift* through Christ.

"You want to love God. This is right; but you should love Him, not simply because it is your duty to love Him, but freely and supremely. So you will love Him, if you believe that He first loved you, and so loved you as to give up for you His only and well-beloved Son.

"You want to have peace and comfort. These you will attain, if you only have personal faith in that faithful saying, which is worthy of all acceptation, that 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,' and that 'there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.'

"You want to feel that you are doing what you have to do, and bearing what you have to bear, in a right spirit, and

Digitized by Google

from a right motive. So you will when you see that you are to serve God, not that you may win eternal life, but that, in your every act of service, you are just rendering to God the results of a new life, which He has freely given, and in the possession of which you rejoice. Believe, realise all this, and you will feel better without trying to do so.

"'To see the law in Christ fulfilled,
To hear His pardoning voice,
Changes the slave into a child,
And duty into choice.'

"This is God's way for us 'to feel better,' and I do not know of any other way than this."

Saying this, I bade him farewell.

Meeting him again not very long after, I saw, by his manner, that he had found what he had been seeking for. He said, in reply to my inquiry, "I feel better now. I am happy now; for I see that, instead of 'trying to feel better,' which I could never do, all I have to do, all I can do, is to place myself, *just as I am*, in the hands of Christ."

Reader, are you among those who, burdened with their sins, are seeking relief by "trying to feel better?" May God, by the grace of His Holy Spirit, convince you of the utter uselessness of every such attempt, and may He bring you to Him who loved you and gave Himself for you, and who offers you perfect and sure relief, "without money and without price." Yes; may you go at once straight to Jesus, in the spirit of the well-known hymn:

"Just as I am—without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God! I come.

Just as I am—and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot;
To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God! I come.

Just as I am—though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God! I come.

Just as I am—poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God! I come.

Just as I am—Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God! I come.

Just as I am—Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down—
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God! I come.

Just as I am—of that free love,
The breadth, length, depth, and height to prove,
Here for a season, then above,
O Lamb of God! I come."

Digitized by Google

THEY FORGOT TO PRAY.



"EVENING, AND AT MORNING, AND AT NOON, WILL I PRAY."

Digitized by Google

They Forgot to Pray.

A Christian was expressing to a minister his thankfulness to God for having been restored from a state of backsliding to the enjoyment of the Divine favour. His friend congratulated him on his recovery, and asked how it was that he had fallen into spiritual darkness and destitution. The other replied, that he fell unexpectedly into temptation. "It came upon me," he exclaimed, "all of a sudden; I did not resist, and I fell, I scarcely know how." The minister answered, that it was not a common case for a faithful servant of God to fall into sin so suddenly; especially as there are many promises in Scripture about God's keeping His people in the time of trial. So he expressed a fear that there had been some "backsliding in heart" before his fall into open sin; and he inquired, "Tell me, had you kept up the spirit and practice of prayer before your calamity happened?"

The man acknowledged that he had been remiss in the duty of prayer; for he had entered into a new business, and he was so occupied and fretted with its cares, that he had neither sufficient recollection nor time for prayer. "I thought so," replied the minister; "God is faithful, but He does not promise to keep those from evil who are negligent and prayerless."

The Lord said that He would be "as dew unto Israel." It is a blessed and solemn promise. Judæa was only watered with rain twice a year, just after the corn was sown, and again before the harvest; which seasons were called "the early and latter rains:" therefore the land was favoured with a copious supply of dew. This kept the grass and other herbs alive under the scorching heat of the summer's sun. Evening dew refreshed the herbage after the heat of the day; and, trickling down to the roots of the plants, made them vegetate during the night. Lasting till morning, the dew provided new vigour, wherewith to withstand the scorching rays of the sun. This merciful provision of Divine Providence aptly illustrates the invigorating influences of Divine grace upon a soul. In answer to the Christian's evening and morning prayers, grace descends into his heart, as dew falls upon the tender herb.

Evening grace refreshes the heart, which is jaded with the cares and anxieties of business during the day. Morning grace prepares it for encountering those evils which beset our path through life. We may have showers of blessing on the Sabbath, when worshipping with the great congregation; and we should expect to be peculiarly visited

Digitized by Google

with the Divine favour on that day, and in such company. But we cannot do without the dews of grace day by day.

He is surely a thoughtless or self-confident man, who will go forth to brave the temptations and trials of the world in which we live, without first getting his soul fortified with grace from on high. Sin lurks around us in a hundred forms; the devil goes about seeking whom he may destroy; our own wayward hearts are prone to listen to the tempter's voice; our eyes and ears are open to unnumbered allurements to worldly desires. What can a poor mortal do in such a world? and how can he withstand its evil influences, unless he be "kept by the power of God through faith?" And faith can only be maintained in healthy vigour by communion with God.

We are in a world in which accidents are so numerous and varied, that merely to recount all that occur would be enough to terrify many hearts. The most cautious cannot screen himself from sudden calamities. "I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."[1] Now God promises His protection in a general way, to keep His people, so that no evil shall befall them but what He will make to work for their good. But His promise is made to those who remember Him in their doings: "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."[2] If you forget to pray for Divine guidance and protection, God may chasten your negligence by allowing you to fall into some one of those many accidents by which you are encompassed.

[1] Jer. x. 23. [2] Prov. iii. 6.

Many persons are so situated in business, that they are exposed to the imposition of others during every hour of the day. The world is so full of deceit and treachery, that we are always liable to be over-reached or misled. It seems almost impossible to guard against the designs of crafty men. The wisest and best of mankind have not escaped them, when they have trusted to their own prudence or sagacity, and have not sought direction from the Lord. There are few, very few persons, who have not to accuse themselves of having done some foolish thing, from which they might have been saved if they had first asked counsel of the Lord. We have a most memorable example of this subject in the case of Joshua.

When this eminent man of God was taking possession of the promised land, at the head of Israel's host, the Gibeonites were afraid of being destroyed along with the neighbouring tribes; so they sent ambassadors, clothed as if they had come from a great distance, with old garments on their backs, and clouted shoes on their feet, and mouldy bread for provision, and old sacks on their asses, and rent bottles. The emissaries told Joshua and the elders that they had come from a far country, "because of the name of the Lord," of whose fame they had heard; and they desired that Israel would make a league with them. So Joshua made a hasty peace with a people, who should have been destroyed; and the princes of Israel confirmed the treaty with an oath, from which they dared not draw back, when they found that they had been imposed upon. Scripture says, they "asked not counsel at the mouth

Digitized by Google

of the Lord."[1] Therefore God allowed them to fall into this foolish and inconvenient mistake, that He might teach them not to depend upon their own wisdom and understanding. Let Joshua's case be a lasting lesson to us, not to forget to pray and inquire of the Lord.

Jesus Christ Himself always prayed. Before appointing His twelve disciples, He spent the whole night in prayer to God. He acted in a similar way on all important occasions. So did His apostles. They came together to ask counsel of the Lord, before they proceeded to any work. Many people act in a contrary way. They form their plans first, and ask God's blessing upon them afterwards; which is virtually asking God to submit to their wisdom. The planning of a work is its most important feature; and we should never forget to ask Divine aid upon our counsels and deliberations.

But we not only have the example of the Saviour to inculcate the duty of constant prayer, we have His direct teaching on the subject. One of His parables was spoken to convey the important lesson, "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."[2] The beautiful prayer which He taught His disciples is evidently intended for daily use. How suited for the devotions of each morning are its petitions, "Give us this day our daily bread," and "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."[3] And what the Saviour taught personally, is taught by many of the inspired writers of His word. David writes, "My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up."[1] And again: "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray."[2] Paul says, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same."[3]

But how can we obtain this mind which was in Christ Jesus; and how can we follow in His steps? Only by imbibing His spirit—by receiving effectually of His grace. It is not natural to us to pray; and when unconverted men do engage in this exercise, it is merely going through a ceremony, or it is the constrained performance of a duty. When such persons omit this duty, they can scarcely be said to forget to pray; for they have never prayed "in spirit and in truth." To pray aright, we must be taught by the Spirit of God. So taught, we shall go to Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour, that we may receive forgiveness of sins through faith in His blood. Then shall we know the blessedness of communion with God, who will answer us by an abundant outpouring of His mercy. Then, too, shall we imbibe more and more of the mind of Christ in the frequency and earnestness of our petitions. It will be our desire continually to walk in a prayerful spirit, remembering the exhortation, "Pray without ceasing."[4] So shall we be able to acknowledge God in all our ways, and He will direct our steps.

[1] Joshua ix. 14. [2] Luke xviii. 1. [3] Matt. vi. 11, 13.

[1] Psalm v. 3. [2] Psalm lv. 17. [3] Col. iv. 2. [4] 1 Thess. v. 17.

Digitized by Google

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT.



DILIGENCE TRAVELLING IN FRANCE.

Digitized by Google

The Sword of the Spirit.

I was travelling towards Bordeaux, says the Rev. C. Malan, and had just set off from Angoulême, when a handsome, showy-looking young man got up into the same part of the coach with myself. He accosted me politely, and soon after setting off he said, "I think, sir, you come from Paris."

"I left Paris the day before yesterday," I answered. "And I suppose," he added eagerly, "you have seen 'The Huguenots!' (a theatrical performance, at that time, in 1839, very famous at Paris). It is a remarkably original composition; every one goes to see it; were not you delighted with it?"

"'The Huguenots!'" I replied, putting my hand into the pocket of the coach, where I had put the New Testament, which I used for reading on my journey; "I have their treasure with me here."

"The treasure of 'The Huguenots!'" said the young man, with surprise, "and pray what is that?" I offered the sacred volume to him. He read the title, and returned it immediately, saying, with scorn, "Ah, I think that book only fit for old women and weak minds."

"I know, sir," I answered, seriously, "that it is very good for me, though I am certainly not an old woman. As to a weak mind, I will not decide upon that: you must judge."

"'I beg your pardon, sir, if I have offended you by my foolish expression; but allow me to speak freely, and to say, that I cannot understand how a man of sense and education, as I perceive you to be (I say it with respect), can approve, and, above all, can believe such a production. Voltaire, at least, did not, and certainly he was not wanting in discernment, or knowledge, or good sense." Here the pupil of such a teacher repeated, with equal fluency and sharpness, the invectives of the philosopher against the Galilean, and His doctrine. The incarnation of the Word, the miracles, the prophecies, the death, and above all, the resurrection of the reputed son of Joseph, were passed over in review, and the conclusion of the whole argument was a song of triumph as to the reason and wisdom of the present age. The young unbeliever was delighted; he thought me reduced to silence and overcome, for I listened to the whole without saying a word.

When he had ended, I own I was tempted to oppose sword to sword, and to answer the follower of Voltaire by arguments, as I thought, of better reasoning than his own. But I was impressed by these words of holy writ—"The

Digitized by Google

weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ,"[1] and, leaving in its sheath the feeble weapon of my own reason, I seized the sword of the Spirit, and answered only in these words: "'If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.'"[2]

"Yes, yes," replied the youth, "so says that book, but on what authority does it speak, that is the question?'"

"'If any man will do His will,'" I continued, still reading, "'he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself.'"[3]

"That is to say," he answered, "that all the learned scholars and philosophers; in short, all men of sense and judgment, in civilized society—all these superior men are wicked and impious, and even atheists, or scoundrels, because they refuse to believe the mysteries, not to say the absurdities, of an obscure book."

"'That your faith' (namely, of the Christian)," I replied, still reading, "'should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.'[4] 'But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty: and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.'[1] 'He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God,'[2] and 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.'"[3]

"Very well, sir; my lot, you think, is settled; and hell, with everlasting flames, is prepared for me, and for the flower of the whole human race; I thank you for your charity."

"Sir," I answered, calmly, "it was not I, but God Himself, who said by His apostle, that 'there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,' but that of Jesus.[4] Jesus also says to you, as well as to every other sinner, 'That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.'[5] You hear these words; they are full of love and mercy."

The youth was silent, and knit his brow. His countenance was gloomy, and for a long while he remained still. Night came on. My neighbour was still dumb, and I thought his ill humour would last until he fell asleep, when, suddenly turning towards me, he said, with much appearance of feeling, "Where, sir, can I obtain the book you have there? for, I must tell you, I begin to think that perhaps I may be wrong, and that you are in the right path. I am even concerned, sir, for the thoughtless words that ——" I interrupted him. "Pray,

[1] 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. [2] 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.
[3] John vii. 17. [4] 1 Cor. ii. 5.

[1] 1 Cor. i. 27, 28. [2] John iii. 18.
[3] John iii. 36. [4] Acts iv. 12. [5] John iii. 15.

Digitized by Google

sir, do not think of any apology, but as you seem already to feel that the Word of God is superior to that of a philosopher, do not let us part without your having this book, which you will allow me to offer to you, when we reach Bordeaux."

From that happy moment our conversation was easy and unrestrained; and it was not till after we had spoken of all the vital doctrines of Christianity that we both yielded to slumber.

The next day my young companion was calm, cordial, and perfectly open; and when I left him he took my hand, saying, "Do you remember the promise that you kindly made me? there is my address." "In a few moments," I answered, "the most precious of books shall be in your hands;" and I hastened to the house of a friend, a Christian brother, to whom I related the above-mentioned facts, and who immediately went to the house of the young traveller, to whom he gave the Book of God, accompanying it with words of peace. He also informed him that, on the same day, and other days following, I should explain some portions of the Holy Scriptures at meetings to which he would be welcome.

This invitation was not given in vain. The same evening the young man, with his book under his arm, came to take his place among the serious hearers whom the gospel drew together.

The next day he returned again at the same hour, and, after service, came up to me, and said, with earnestness, "Sir, you never can know all the good which this book has already done me, and all the pleasure I have felt in hearing you, both yesterday and to-day. Henceforth this book shall be my study—my sole study."

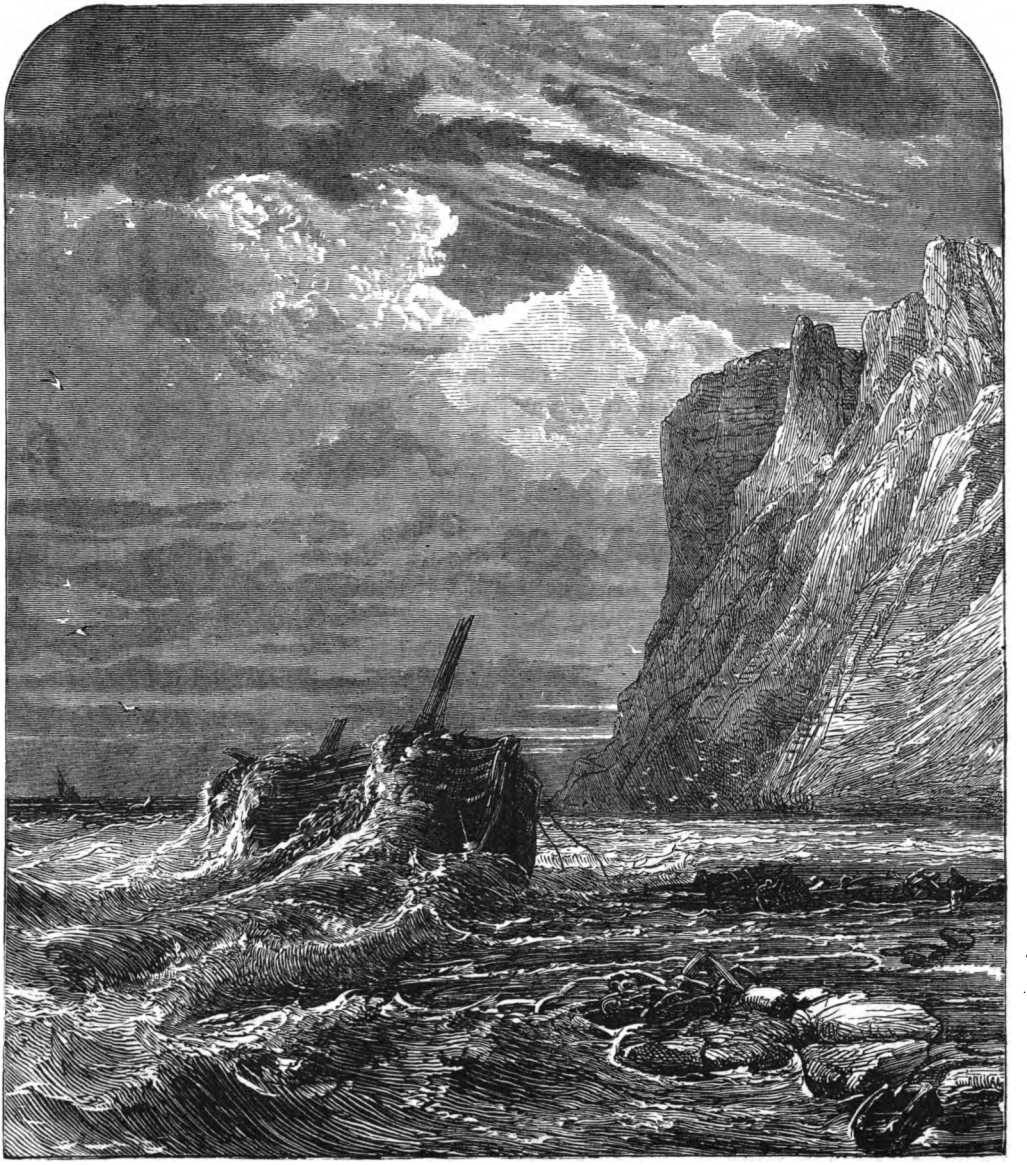
"And what will you do to-morrow?" I asked him. "It is the king's birthday; there will be a great ball, and much bustle, and no doubt you will be invited." "I have refused," answered the young man, with firmness. "I shall not be there. In the morning I shall go and hear you, as you preach in public; and in the evening, if it please God, I shall come and hear you again."

He came; and, for the first time, this fashionable young man, who had hitherto made plays and balls his chief pleasures, considered it his highest privilege to worship God in His temple, and in the evening to join some disciples of that Saviour whom he had once learned to scorn.

Reader, if you are not a believer, but are resting on your own reason, and the Bible is in your eyes only a book for narrow and weak minds, learn that this very word will judge you at the last day; and it were better for your soul that you had never been born, than that, despising Him who speaks to you from heaven, you count as an unholy thing the blood of Jesus shed upon the cross, which alone can cleanse you from all sin.

Digitized by Google

SEEK TO FIND.



SHE LIES ON THE ROCKS—MASTS, BULWARKS, AND CREW ALL SWEPT AWAY!

Digitized by Google

Seek to Find.



It is not an uncommon thing for a person to find what he never looked for. Saul sought his father's asses, and he found a crown. Borne on his couch to Jesus a man sought cure of his palsy, and he got the pardon of his sins. Perched among the branches of a sycamore, the publican sought a sight of the despised Nazarene, whose name filled the whole land; he climbed the tree to gratify his curiosity, and came down to be saved with his house.

As it was then, so it is still. In the place of worship to which people come, from early custom, to gain or keep a decent name; to gratify, it may be, an idle curiosity; to see, like Zaccheus, or to be seen, like others; they find what they never sought, and never expected—they find a Saviour: there some poor careless sinner who never sought a Saviour finds one; and the prophecy is fulfilled, "I am found of them that sought Me not."[1]

But while this is all true, let it not be forgotten that God's appeal to men is, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found."[2] Bear in mind, reader, that the *promise* is made to the *seeker*. We say the *promise*. God *can* find those who do not seek Him; but God does not *promise* to be found of any but those who *do*. And bear in mind, also, that a more cheering, comforting, encouraging truth does not exist than this, that while it is a matter of dark uncertainty if any man on earth who does not seek God shall ever find Him, it is a matter of Bible certainty, and blessed certainty, that there is not a man on earth who, if he seeks God, shall fail to find Him.

If he seeks God—that is the general truth; but it includes in it two qualifications. He shall find God if he does seek Him; provided, first, that he seek Him in the *right way;* and, secondly, that he seek Him at the *right season.*

Now as to the way, let there be no mistake—and for this reason: it matters little if I mistake my way into a town, because if I miss the way by one road, I can reach the place by another; but it matters much if I mistake my way to heaven, because there is but one way by which I can reach it.

The breath of spring is melting the snow of the mountain: the shepherd drives his sheep to the hill-side, and he finds there a dead body. There are no marks of violence on it, no sign of the man having died of hunger. How came

[1] Isaiah lxv. 1. [2] Isaiah lv. 6.

Digitized by Google

he there, and why did the man die? Because he mistook *the way.*

The night comes on with threats of storm and tempest; a vessel steers for the harbour's mouth. By-and-by darkness closes in, signals of distress are made, and gun after gun is heard. At length the morning breaks, and there she lies on the rocks—masts, bulwarks, and crew all swept away. And why? Because by a hand's breadth she mistook the channel.

And if it is a matter of great danger often to the body for a man to mistake the way, we say it is a matter of still greater danger to the soul to mistake the way, and of great importance to know the right way to God, to that mercy we need to pardon us, and that grace we need to help us. There are many ways to ruin, and many doors to the pit. There are as many doors and ways to hell as there are sins, and these are very many. One man is a drunkard, and he goes reeling thither; another man takes the way of covetousness, and goes thitherward heaping up gold; one man takes one way, and one another. But ever grave it in your mind and memory—there is *but one way to heaven.*

Now, what is that way? "I," says Christ, "I AM THE WAY." He does not say I am *a* way, or one of many ways; He does not say, I am the most pleasant, or the most sure, or the easiest, or shortest of all ways; but He says, I am *the* way—the only way—the single way—the way besides which there is no other way. If, then, any one ask, "How am I to go to God?" The answer is, by Christ; or, in the words of Scripture, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."[1]

The way is made to your feet. Christ *made* the way, and you have but to *take* the way. It is a God-honouring way, a man-humbling way, a self-crucifying way—but it is a sure way; and no one who ever took that way yet failed to reach the kingdom of heaven.

But as there is a right way, so there is a *right season* for taking it. The Word of God says, "Seek ye the Lord *while* He may be found." The time there is the main point. Seek Him while He may be found, and in the right way, and you are sure to find Him.

Most people who hear the gospel would probably, if asked, say that they *intend* to seek the Lord. But to such intenders one or two considerations, as to the right season, are of importance.

Clearly the season for beginning to seek God is not in *eternity.* God is not to be thus found in eternity. Eternity is that state into which the soul is ushered by death. It is a solemn thing to die; not only because of the change which comes over the body, but still more because of the change that comes over the soul—not a change of character, but a change of state. There is no change of character. A man dies the same as he was the moment before he died, and will be the same for all eternity. As the tree falls, so the tree lies. They that are filthy are filthy still; they that are righteous are righteous still. You must not, then, wait till eternity to seek the Lord. When eternity arrives, when the cry is heard, "The bridegroom cometh!" when the lamps are lighted,

[1] Acts xvi. 31.

Digitized by Google

and the door is shut, it will be a sad sight to many a man at whose door Christ has stood for days and years, and knocked and knocked, and he would not open to Him. Ah! those men will stand in their turn at Christ's door, and knock and knock, with prayers such as they never put up before—"Lord, Lord, open to us;" but Christ will not open to them, but will say, "I know you not." The door is shut. Jesus is now on a throne of grace; and the question is, will you wait till He comes to a throne of judgment? He is now waiting and willing to be your Saviour; will you go on in impenitence till He finally turn from you? Oh! go not thus to the grave, where "there is neither work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom" to be found; but *seek the Lord* NOW.

Again, a *deathbed season* is not a likely one in which the Lord is to be found. Yet this is the very season in which many people intend to seek the Lord. Whatever may be said of the young and ignorant, it is astonishing that any one who has ever looked on a dying bed can come to such a resolution. They intend to read the Bible with a dying eye—to pray with a dying voice—to listen with a dying ear to the words and tongue they have rejected for years. And what is there in this plan to persuade men to resort to it? Is it honourable to God? or is it a suitable time?

One can hardly conceive a plan more dishonouring to God. It, in fact, just says this: "I will turn to God when I can do no better; I will give my strength, my spring, my summer, my all to Satan; and to the God that loved me, and to the Saviour that died for me, I will offer the dregs of my existence, the few worthless, wretched hours that terminate man's life." Can any one say this is not dishonouring to God and the Saviour? "If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts." [1] "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a Father, where is Mine honour? and if I be a Master, where is My fear?" [2]

Of this we may be sure, that the Lord is never so likely to be found as He is now. You know, reader, where you are now; you know not where you shall be to-morrow. The present moment is yours to repent and believe the gospel; to-morrow your life may have ceased. But if you still live, it is quite possible you may not live to be converted. God says, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." The word may this day go forth, "Let him alone." But, however that may be, your situation is likely to be worse to-morrow than to-day. And why? because a man going on in sin is like one going down a hill; every step he takes makes his ascent more difficult and his return less likely. Every moment you let a fire burn, the harder it is to put it out. You cannot continue in sin without the heart growing harder and the distance between God and you daily growing greater.

[1] Malachi i. 8. [2] Malachi i. 6.

Digitized by Google

"The House Appointed for All Living."



Digitized by Google

"The House Appointed for All Living."



"Oh mother, mother," cried a little girl standing at a shop-door in the outskirts of a large town, "see, there is a funeral!" The child had not long come from the country, or she would not have thought of calling her mother's attention to the sad procession which moved slowly down the street. People are familiar with these sights in every town, and scarcely turn their heads to look at what has become so common. From street, or alley, or court, the coffin with its scanty covering is borne forth, and one or two mourners follow in faded black; and through the busy hum of life they carry their dead to the churchyard, that they may bury them out of their sight. If any turn from their shops or their stalls, to cast a passing glance upon the coffin and the bearers, they regard the funeral as something in which they have no interest, and never think that some day they too will be carried to the burial, and laid in "the house appointed for all living." Or, if they do, the thought is soon stifled, and they give themselves up once more heart and soul to the occupations of life.

It may be so with the reader of this paper. You see death all around you; perhaps it has lately been in the house where you dwell; you may have met it as you have walked through the streets; but the warning has been unheeded, and you forget that *you* too must die. And yet you must. The eye fixed on these words shall be sealed in darkness; the heart which now beats so strongly shall be stilled, and you in all probability shall be placed in the shroud, and laid in the coffin, and be carried forth to the grave.

Whatever else is uncertain, death is certain. Every one must be vanquished by "the last enemy." He spares no rank, no age; the king and the beggar, the young and the old, must enter the land of darkness and the shadow of death, and must "say to corruption, Thou art my father, and to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister."

It is a solemn thought for thee, O man, O woman, who art now reading these words, that after death is "the judgment." Man is not like the beast which perishes; when "the dust returns to the earth as it was, the spirit returns to God who gave it." The soul goes back to God, to render in an account of its deeds; and woe, woe unto it, if it appear before the eye of the Almighty with its sins unpardoned! "The sting of death is sin;" it is sin which gives to death its terror, which makes it "a fearful thing to

Digitized by Google

fall into the hands of the living God," for "the wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness of men." "The wages of sin is death;" death to the body, and death to the soul—eternal death in that "outer darkness where is weeping and gnashing of teeth:" where "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." And these wages are your rightful due, O sinner, and shall be paid to the uttermost farthing, if you do not "flee from the wrath to come." You are guilty in the sight of God, your own conscience accuses you, your own memory convicts you; in the book of God's remembrance are written against you sins of thought, and word, and deed; sins of omission for duties not done, and of commission for deeds of guilt; sins which will condemn you to hell if they are not blotted out from that record which shall be unfolded at the great day.

But *can* they be "blotted out?" Can one so guilty be pardoned? Can He who is "of purer eyes than to look upon iniquity" receive you to His favour, and forget the past? Oh yes, He can, God's own words are these: "Come now, and let us reason together, . . . though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."[1] He has set forth Christ as a propitiation for sin through faith in His blood, "to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are passed, through the forbearance of God." I have a message from God to you, O sinner. I call upon you now, before it is too late, to consider your ways; to "repent and believe the gospel." I remind you, ungrateful as you have been for many years, going astray from your birth, following the devices and desires of your own heart, that the Saviour is willing and "able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him." Was it not for sinners that He shed His blood? Was He not wounded for our transgressions? Did He not bear our griefs, and carry our sorrows?[1] Did He not think of the soul, of its guilt, its danger, its value, when He fell prostrate on the ground in the garden, and drank the cup of agony to the dregs, that none of its bitterness might be left for repentant sinners? Was He not pierced on the cross for our sins? Yes, our sins made Him sweat great drops of blood in Gethsemane. Our sins brought such a cloud of darkness upon His soul on Calvary, that He cried aloud, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" And now, though you have grieved His Spirit, and broken His law, and depised His gospel, and lived in sin, He still calls you to Himself, and says with a purpose of mercy toward your wretched soul, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." Then hearken to His voice, and despise not the riches of His grace, and "account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation." How terrible to reject such a Saviour, to die refusing the offer of His love!

And what are you choosing instead of His salvation? Some base pleasure? Some trifling gain? Some miserable gratification? "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

[1] Isaiah i. 13.

[1] Isaiah liii. 4–6.

Digitized by Google

Oh that thou wert wise, that thou wouldest know, even thou, in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!

Take courage from the following instance of a man who was wicked and a profligate, and who was brought to seek pardon for his sins by having his thoughts directed to the certainty of death. Through the providence of God he strolled into a place of worship, where he heard the fifth chapter of Genesis, in which it is recorded that men who had lived for hundreds of years had died at last. "All the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died. . . . All the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died. . . . All the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years, and he died . . . And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died." The frequent repetition of the words "and he died," notwithstanding the great length of years they had lived, struck him so deeply with the thought of death and eternity, that it was, by God's grace, the means of changing his whole mind. He remained till the end of the service, and listened with the utmost reverence. He then went home, and prayed earnestly to God for forgiveness, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, and, from a dissolute unbeliever, became a most sincere and godly Christian.

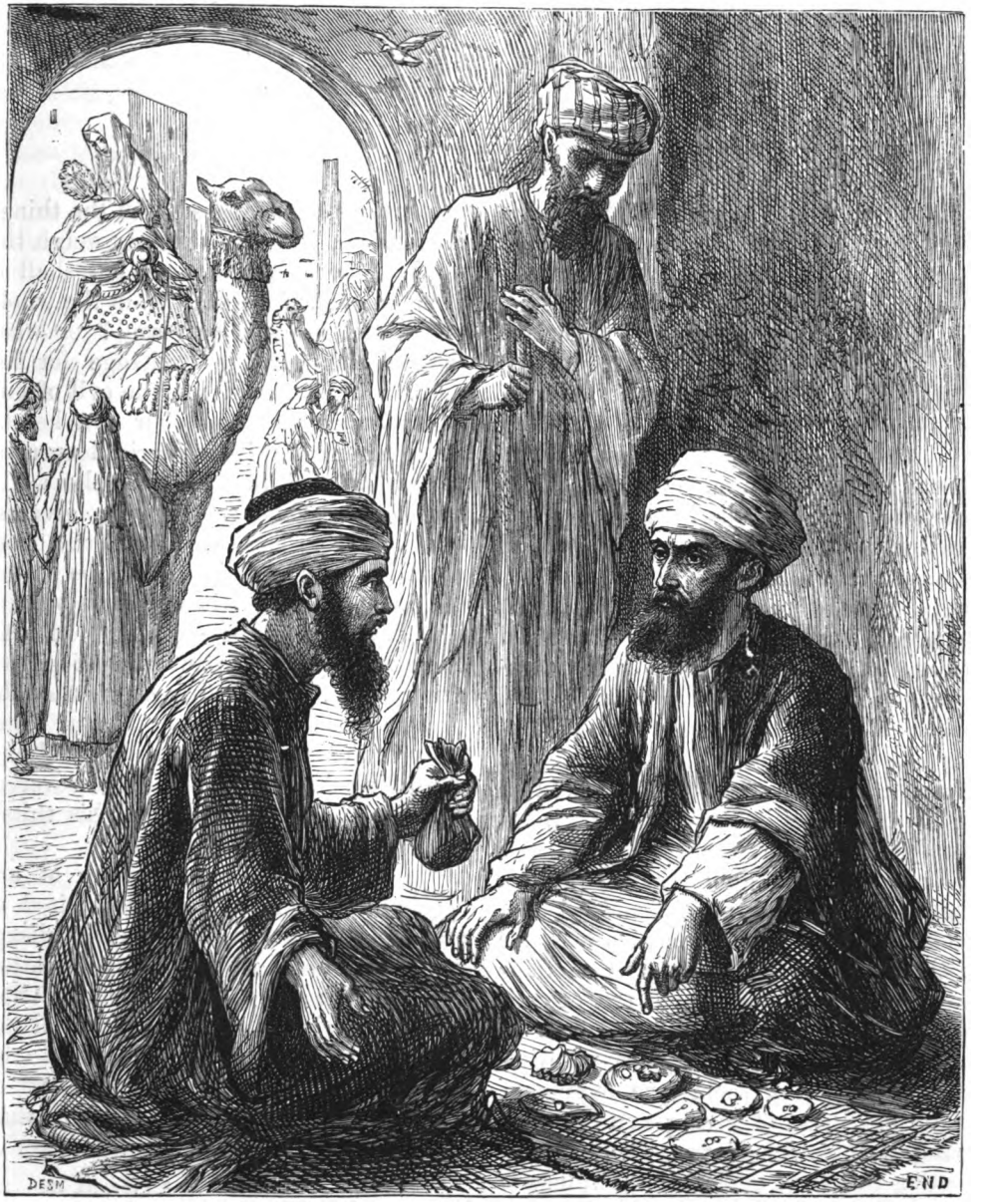
Why should not the thought that this "world passeth away, and the lust thereof," have the same effect on you? Why should not you cast yourself at the throne of grace, and cry for mercy, and implore the gift of the Holy Spirit? Why should you not lay hold on the peace, the hope, the joy which are promised to those who believe? Let no coveted pleasure, no fancied interest, no wile of the devil, no treachery of your own heart keep you from Christ, or stand between you and the salvation of your soul.

Oh, flee from this terrible doom to the Saviour! Escape for your life. "The house appointed for all living" is before you; you are hastening to its dark chambers; you may soon be laid in its narrow cell, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." You must die; you must be judged; you must spend an eternity either in heaven or in hell. For which place are you preparing? Consider. To which place does conscience whisper that you are going? Reflect. If you are walking along the broad road which leads to destruction; if you are following "a multitude to do evil;" then turn at once from the paths of death; repent, believe, obey. There is cleansing for your guilt in the blood of Jesus, and grace in the Holy Spirit to enable you to overcome your corruption, and room in the heart of God for your reception. A voice is heard saying to you, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."[1]

[1] Rev. iii. 20.

Digitized by Google

"ONLY A PEARL."



"THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE UNTO A MERCHANTMAN SEEKING GOODLY PEARLS."

Digitized by Google

"Only a Pearl."



An Arab, who had lost his way in the desert, and had wandered about for many hours over the glowing waste of sand, was almost ready to perish for thirst. At last he descried the green track of a rivulet, and rousing up what little strength was left him, he succeeded in reaching it; but, alas! the water was dried up. On looking mournfully round him, he saw a leathern bag near the spot, probably left there accidentally by some former visitor to the spring. He seized it eagerly, for he thought it might contain some dates whose moisture would help to allay his sufferings; but on opening it, and seeing what it was that gleamed inside, he dashed it away, in an agony of disappointment, and cried, "*It is only a pearl!*"

There can be no doubt that the things which men think most beautiful and prize most highly, which nobles long for in their mansions and monarchs on their thrones, and to obtain which the poor as well as the rich are willing to labour so hard and suffer so much, are as little capable of giving them true happiness, as the pearl was of giving new life to a dying man. And if you who are now reading this tract could see the things of time in their true light and in their right proportions, as compared with the things of eternity; if you could duly weigh the words of Jesus Christ,—"What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"[1] if you could see the evil of sin, know the sinfulness of your own hearts, and hunger and thirst after righteousness, you would feel that nothing the world has to offer could satisfy your greatest wants. If its richest treasures or its most winning forms of delight could be placed within your reach, it would only be a mockery to attempt soothing you with these while your heart was breaking with grief for sin, or with terror at the thought of being lost, and you would put them away in the spirit which made the dying Arab fling down what he had discovered, in place of something to slack his thirst, and cry, "It is only a pearl!"

There is, however, a treasure of unspeakable value, which all are invited to seek, and in which none can be disappointed. This is a full and free salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. "She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her."[2] It is the pearl of great price.[3] Its value consists in this, that it is a deliverance from the power of

[1] Mark viii. 36, 37. [2] Prov. iii. 15.
[3] Matt. xiii. 46.

Digitized by Google

sin, and from its sorrowful consequences, and is an introduction to a new life, as well as to a new state of glorious privilege. This new and happy life begins the very moment we have received forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ. From that time the Holy Spirit works in us the heavenly graces of "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance;"[1] and imparts the spirit and practice of "whatsoever things are lovely;"[2] lovely principles, lovely tempers, lovely actions, and all the "beauty of holiness."[3] So that when God promises to save His people, He says that "He will beautify the meek with salvation."[4]

The value of this "pearl of great price" is increased by its *enduring character:* it will last for ever. This cannot be said of the costliest earthly good. A time must come when, however valuable any earthly blessing may be in itself, it will cease to be valuable to us; but this can never be the case with salvation. A man ready to die through famine, might say of the jewel that shines in a coronet, "It is only a pearl!" but he would not be disposed to say of this "It is only salvation!" Many a dying worldling would eagerly give all the pearls in the world, if he had them at command, for a continuance of life; but when all other treasures sink in value or fade from view, and even when it seems impertinence and cruelty to name them, this is infinitely precious.

And this "pearl of great price" is of infinite value because it is a treasure *which can be taken into another world.* This cannot be said of any earthly treasure: "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out;" and the richest man who is not "rich toward God," becomes poor the instant he dies. Choose this good part, and it "shall not be taken away" from you.[1] Where is the robber who can deprive you of this pearl? "Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "No!" cries an apostle, "not even death itself."[2] We can take this with us into eternity; and there, free from all that dims it now, it will burn and shine for ever.

If you would obtain this blessing, you must *seek it.* A few indolent wishes, a few languid words of prayer, a hope that you may one day chance to find it, and all will be right at last, will never bring the boon into your possession. Salvation is not found by accident; we are not to expect that we shall meet with it when we are seeking something else; for though the annals of Divine grace contain some remarkable instances of sudden and unexpected conversion, these are cases the hidden circumstances of which are unknown to us, and at all events they are the exception, not the rule. You must remember that if God is sometimes found of those who seek Him not, He is always found of those who seek Him. As men dig for the treasure, and dive for the pearl with labour, patience, and much self-denial, so you must search for salvation. "Search the Scriptures," said Jesus Christ; "for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me."[3] Search them with a

[1] Gal. v. 22, 23. [2] Phil. iv. 8.
[3] Psa. xcvi. 9. [4] Psa. cxlix. 4.

[1] Luke x. 42. [2] Rom. viii. 35, 38.
[3] John v. 39.

Digitized by Google

prayerful spirit; saying, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."[1] "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find."[2] If you use these methods of search with truth and diligence, you will discover in the Word of God, by the light of the Holy Spirit, a full salvation from sin and sorrow, through the Lord Jesus Christ. With Luther, you will learn to know Christ crucified, learn to sing a new song. Renouncing your own work you will cry to Him, Lord, thou art my righteousness, and I am Thy sin. Thou hast taken on Thee what was mine, and given to me what was Thine; what Thou wast not Thou becamest, that I might become what I was not. Feeling that you are justified by the righteousness of Christ, you will be all the more earnest to be sanctified by His Spirit; and by this twofold work of Jesus, His work *for* you, and His work *in* you, He will say to your soul, "I am thy salvation."

An African native, named Genote, came to a missionary, saying, "Oh, my sins!—my sins! they make my heart as heavy as a mountain of lead. I have no knowledge, no wisdom; I know not what to do: tell me what to do." The missionary explained to him the grace of the Saviour. He partly comprehended the matter; light was breaking in. "Tell me again," said he, "for I am old and stupid." His eyes were fixed, tears ran down his cheeks, and he expressed his astonishment at the mercy and goodness of God. At length he said he would come and live near the spot, that he might hear more of Jesus. There was, however, this difficulty in the way: he had many cattle, and there was no room for them about the missionary station; at last he said, "I am a Kaffir, and I am fond of my cattle; but *I'll get rid of the last of them* that I may come hither and hear the word." "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."[1] Many hesitate about accepting "the pearl of great price," because they must give up some sinful habit, some personal indulgence, or some dishonest gain. They are not prepared to "sell all that they have," to buy it. If you have been feeling this sinful hesitation, if you have been unwilling to give up a little preference, or a little worldly profit for Christ's sake, after having been plainly told that, though He was rich, for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich; do you not now feel shame and sorrow at the thought?—will you not now repent and believe in Him? Let not the world keep you from the Saviour any more. Salvation is the only thing which can claim to be called "THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE."

[1] Psa. cxix. 18. [2] Matt. vii. 7.

[1] Matt xiii. 45, 46.

Digitized by Google

A Song that broke a Sinner's Heart.



Digitized by Google

A Song that broke a Sinner's Heart.



It was a fine evening in autumn. The last portion of a plentiful harvest had just been brought home, and every one about that most hospitable of all dwellings, an Irish farm-house, looked busy and cheerful. The farmer and his labourers were giving a few finishing touches to the newly erected corn stacks which crowded the yard; and his wife was superintending the milking of her cows; while the young girls who performed this part of the domestic duties beguiled the pleasant toil by singing snatches of the mirthful melodies of their native land. A group of noisy children at play completed the scene.

It was a company such as it would have been difficult for any person of kind feeling to contemplate without forming a wish responding to the salutation of an old woman who was observed tottering up a lane leading from the high road; and who, entering the yard, addressed each busy group, as she walked through it, in these words: "God save all here, and keep you long happy." Her greeting was answered with a warm, "Welcome, Nelly, kindly welcome."

The farmer's wife seemed particularly pleased to see her; while her little daughter, who was at play with the other children, left them the moment she saw the old woman, and, springing into her arms, exclaimed, "Nelly, it is a very long time since you came to us."

"So it is, my darling," added her mother; "and as I am busy here, do you take her into the house, and make her sit down to rest herself; and when I go in, Nelly, you shall have as good a cup of tea as ever you tasted, for you look tired."

Nelly was a favourite everywhere, especially among young people. She had been, for many years, living on the charity of the people in a large district, whom she visited by turns, and from whom she seemed to have obtained a licence for her vocation of wandering mendicant, as her claims on their kindness were never called in question.

"You've grown tall since I saw you, mavourneen," said Nelly to her little hostess, when they were seated together in the cool, quiet kitchen; "and I know you've been good ever since, so I brought you this from the fair," presenting her with some gingerbread.

"Thank you, Nelly; it was very loving of you to do that for me," replied the child.

"I would do more than that for you, my pretty blossom," said the old woman;

Digitized by Google

"and so I did too. Knowing how fond you are of songs, I learned a new song, every word of it, to sing for you. So here it is, and it will make you laugh too." She sang it accordingly; and the little girl did laugh, but not much. When it was ended, she said, "I too have learned a new song since I saw you, Nelly. Mother let me go every Sunday to the school the ladies have up at the great house, and I learned it there," and the child sang as follows:—

"How loving is Jesus, who came from the sky
In tenderest pity for sinners to die!
His hands and His feet they were nailed to the tree;
And all this He suffered for sinners like me.
How gladly free pardon does Jesus impart
To all who receive Him by faith in their heart!
No evil befalls them; their home is above,
And Jesus throws round them the arms of His love.

How precious is Jesus to all who believe!
And out of His fulness what grace they receive!
When weak He supports them, when erring He guides,
And everything needful He kindly provides.
Oh! give then to Jesus your earliest days:
They only are happy who walk in His ways.
In life or in death He will still be their friend;
For those whom He loves He will love to the end."

"Well, Nelly, is not my song prettier than yours?" inquired the little girl when she had ended. "And it is true, every word of it, and all about the good Saviour who died for us."

The old woman made no answer for some time, but looked as if she were deeply considering the question. She then said, "All true is it? Let me hear it again, my child; but say it—don't sing it, and I shall hear it plainer."

The child complied with this request by repeating the hymn in an impressive manner. A silence even longer than the first now followed, which was interrupted by the return of the family to the house, and the preparations for supper.

On the following morning it was observed that Nelly intended to take leave of her hospitable entertainers, and proceed on her way. She was pressed to remain longer, but could not be prevailed on to do so, giving several reasons for refusing; among others, she said she was not quite well, and felt anxious to get to a relative who lived at some distance. Even the entreaties of the little girl could not avail to change her resolution. She set out to pursue her journey, and, having reached a cottage about three miles from the farm-house, she stopped there, intending to remain there for the night, because, short as the walk was, she felt unusually tired.

Her stay here was a longer one than she expected. She was taken very ill in the night, and was unable to leave her bed on the following day. The poor people whose guest she was did everything that they could do for her; but she grew worse.

When questioned about her bodily ailments, she would say, "Oh; what do they signify? Do you think I mind a few pains and aches? Oh, no! It is the load that I have here that is hurting me," pressing her hand to her breast. "Oh! what shall I do, if it is not taken away?" When her good-natured friends understood that uneasiness of mind was her chief complaint, it was at once suggested that the comforts of religion should be resorted to; and the priest was sent for to apply them. On his arrival, finding the case of the old

Digitized by Google

woman to be quite hopeless, he immediately began to anoint her, and prepare her for death, according to the practice of the Romish Church.

After his departure, the woman of the house went to Nelly and said, as if not feeling the slightest doubt that the priest had effected what they desired, "Well! are you not quite happy now? Where is the weight upon your heart now?"

The sick woman only moaned. On the question being several times repeated, she at last replied, "Where is the weight on my heart, agra? Is it that you want to know? Just where it was, just where it was, every bit of it: and how can I appear before God while it is there?"

"Ohone, poor Nelly! is there anything we can do for you?" cried the kind-hearted woman.

"There is," Nelly replied. "Send to the farm of Mrs. Brady, and ask her to let her little girl come to see me at once, before I die."

A messenger was at once sent to the farm, and very soon the little Sunday scholar arrived on her mission of love. No sooner was she seated at the bedside of the sick woman than she was requested to repeat the hymn. Old Nelly listened, her eyes fixed upon the child's face, as if her soul drank in comfort with every word she heard. She lay quiet for a long time after it was finished, and there was an expression of peace, even of joy, in her face that indicated a decided change in her feelings.

"Is the load gone, Nelly?" inquired her friend.

"Yes, gone, all gone." The words had reached her heart—

"His hands and His feet they were nailed to the tree,
And all this He suffered for sinners like me.
How gladly free pardon does Jesus impart
To all who receive Him by faith in the heart!

"I die happy," she said. And before long she died.

It was but a short time that Nelly lived after the song of the child broke her heart, and it was in her dying hours only that she seems to have found peace. We would not, therefore, speak too confidently about her. But if she really felt the burden of her sin, and if she obtained rest from her burden by simple faith in a dying Saviour, she is a saved soul. The grace of God's Holy Spirit has triumphed in her salvation. And it is only by the same grace, working often by means as simple as those which were blessed to Nelly, that any sinner can be saved. Reader, your heart must be broken, and your heart must be healed by this grace; or you will remain "dead in trespasses and sins," a "child of wrath, even as others."

Digitized by Google

How to Spend Sunday.



Digitized by Google

How to Spend Sunday.

A TALK BETWEEN TWO WORKING MEN.



WILLIAM GRAHAM and Edward Allen were fitters in a large engine manufactory in a town in the north of England. Graham was foreman of his department, and Allen, who had recently entered the works, belonged to the staff under his superintendence. In one respect they were wide asunder as the poles. Graham was a truly Christian man, whose place in the house of God was never vacant, except from causes which were unavoidable; and he was, besides, a diligent Sunday-school teacher. His manly consistency had secured for him the respect of all his fellow-workmen, though many of them had no sympathy whatever with his religious principles. Allen, on the contrary, made it his boast that he had not been above half a dozen times at either church or chapel since he was married, ten years ago.

One morning some difficulty had arisen about a piece of rather complicated work which had been intrusted to Allen, and he applied to Graham for advice and directions.

"I tell you what," said Graham, "I've a book at home which will help us. Come to-night, and we'll look at it."

Allen readily complied. The first thing which struck him, on entering Graham's house, was the air of comfort which pervaded everything. He knew exactly what Graham's income was, and he was surprised to see how much could be got out of it. The children were neatly dressed; there was a nice carpet on the parlour floor; and a tolerably-sized book-case was well filled with good books. "I wonder," thought Allen, "how in the world he does it all."

Graham could have told him that he never entered a public-house, and never spent a penny on either drink or tobacco. If all the money Allen had spent in that way had been saved, he would have had a little fortune.

The book to which Graham had referred was produced. They found in it all they wanted, and laid their plans accordingly.

Allen then rose to take his departure, but Graham persuaded him to remain and spend the evening.

After a little further talk on various topics, Graham said, "By the way, Allen, where do you go on Sundays? We've got a nice church and a good minister, and perhaps, if you go nowhere else, you would have no objection to go with me to-morrow."

Allen answered: "When a fellow has been working hard all the week he wants a bit of rest and a mouthful of fresh air on a Sunday; and I think that's a far better way of spending the day than shutting one's self up in a church."

Digitized by Google

"I don't deny," said Graham, "that rest is a good thing; and I believe God gave us the Sunday that we might rest; nor do I deny that fresh air is a good thing either. Still, don't you think a man may rest and get fresh air on a Sunday, and go to church besides? My idea is that God gave us the Sunday, not just that we might rest on it, but that we might worship Him, and that we might hear about salvation and heaven."

"Ah, well, replied Allen, "I dare say you were brought up that way, and so you keep to it. I wasn't; and I think my way is as good as yours."

"I'm sorry to say," answered Graham, "that I was not, as you think, brought up that way. I tried your way for a good while, and so know the difference. Besides, I've seen a good deal of men that spent their Sundays in what they called enjoyment, and a good deal, too, of men who went to church and Sunday-school; and my experience is that church and chapel-going men are ever so much better fitted for their work on Monday than your 'fresh air' men. Those who had been at church or chapel were scarcely ever late on the Monday morning; they looked as if they had really rested; and they began their work with a will, and as though they had some heart in it. But those who had been rambling in the country, or lounging at home, or drinking—which I fear was the case with too many—often came late; their faces were pale and haggard; they did their work badly; and it took them a day or two to get right again. I don't know how it may be with you; but I used to find that a long country stroll, or an excursion by the railway, led to sundry calls at public-houses during the day; and that a Sunday so spent was very likely to be finished up in the public-house. Now, to say nothing of the drink that is taken, I don't believe that the close atmosphere of a public-house, where ever so many men are smoking and drinking, is any better than that of the most crowded church; rather worse I should say."

"Well," resumed Allen, "there may be something in all that; but I don't believe in parsons. My notion is, they just preach for what they get."

"I don't deny," replied Graham, "that there may have been too many parsons, as you call them, who have cared a good deal more about the wool than the sheep; but I am certain our minister is not one of that sort. I know pretty well who'll be amongst the first at the house when we're in any trouble. And he's not so well paid for it, I can tell you."

"But I don't believe," said Allen, "that religious people care much about such as I. I see them going into church on Sundays in their fine dresses, and I feel as though, if I went in, they would all look down upon me."

"You never made a greater mistake, Allen. All sorts of people go to our church, rich and poor; and the poorest are made most freely welcome. Nothing pleases any of them better than to see such as you and I. Only try; everybody will be glad to see you."

"I am much obliged to you," replied Allen, "and I can't but say its very kind of them; still I don't think I should enjoy it if I went. I like a bit of good singing as well as anybody; but I can't stand those long prayers."

Digitized by Google

"Well," said Graham, our singing is, to my fancy, first-rate. There's nothing fine about it; but it's singing that all the congregation can join in, and they do so. I can tell you it warms my heart and lifts me up wonderfully in praise to God. As to the prayers, I can't say I ever find them long. There are so many things I want, and they help me so well to ask them, that I am never weary. Besides, it is a great duty, and a great privilege too, to pray; and God commands not only to pray, each by himself, but with His people in His house. Ah, Allen, if you only knew the comfort of prayer, you would not make that an objection to going to church."

"But there's another thing," said Allen, "which I don't think I should like—I mean the doctrines which are preached in most churches and chapels. Preachers tell people, don't they, that God is ever so angry with them, if they don't do what is exactly right, and that He will send them down to hell?"

"Our minister," replied Graham, "tells us nothing that he does not find in the Bible—and that, you know, is God's Book, and it is all true. He does tell us that we are by nature sinners, and that 'the wages of sin is death.'[1] He puts that very plainly. But then he tells us about God's great love, in giving us His Son Jesus to die for us;[2] how Jesus 'bare our sins in His own body on the tree;'[1] and how, believing in Him and repenting of all our sins, we can be completely forgiven. He tells us, too, of the Holy Spirit, who can so change our hearts that the love of sin shall be taken away. Besides all this, he tells us how Jesus will take every soul that believes in Him to heaven. But just come and hear for yourself."

"Well, I think I will."

"And bring your wife and children with you."

"That," replied Allen, "will have to depend on what missus says; but I'll see."

"A sad thing, Allen," said Graham, "for your children to grow up heathens in a Christian land. By the way, if they don't go to a Sunday-school, send them to ours."

Allen fulfilled his promise, and went with Graham to church next Sunday morning. He felt a little strange at first; but he was so much interested by what he heard, that it needed little persuasion to induce him to go again; and his place is now never vacant, except through illness or absence from home. He has often expressed his thankfulness to Graham for his kindly interest in him; and he thanks God with his whole heart that He ever sent him such a friend.

[1] Rom. vi. 23. [2] John iii. 16. [1] 1 Pet. ii. 24.

Digitized by Google

Good News for the Streets and Lanes.



Digitized by Google

Good News for the Streets and Lanes.



When walking along the streets, I have sometimes wondered how many of those I met were caring for their souls, and loved the Lord Jesus, and were ready to meet God. And the thought has come across me that we must all stand together before the judgment seat, and at such times I have been almost ready to cry aloud in the streets, "Flee from the wrath to come!" Busy as they all are, how many are busy for nothing but the world and the body! Yet there is a message sent to them direct from God, a message of *life*, such good news as would make them happy for ever, if but heartily embraced; to every dweller in the street, to every passer by, to rich and poor alike, this message comes, for the command of God to His messenger is, "Go into the *streets*.. of the city." Oh that men would hear!

Now let us leave the main street and turn down this narrow lane. There are not so many people here. The din of carriages grows fainter and fainter in the distance, and at length is lost altogether; the courts and lanes we pass through become more narrow and close; everything shows that we have left the rich streets, and are in places where none but the poor live. And here we are in a small court, with a wall at the end so that we can go no farther. Let us look about us. The place is dark and dirty, the houses mean and out of repair, the glass is out of many of the windows, and some are stopped up with paper and rags. Heaps of rubbish lie rotting in the court, and on the door-steps little children are playing, pale, and dirty, and neglected. It looks as if none but the poor inhabitants ever come this way; it is not a tempting place. Nevertheless let us enter one of the houses. We pass along the small and dirty passage, and begin to mount the crazy staircase; will it bear us? It creaks at every step, yet we get safe up, passing one door after another. Now we are on the top floor, we open one of the doors and go in. The floor of the room is uneven and unwashed and full of holes; the walls may once have been white-washed, but are anything but white now; the ceiling much the same; there is but one window in the sloping roof, and that has hardly a whole pane in it; there is no fire in the grate, though the day is cold; and as for furniture, a heap of straw in the corner, none of the cleanest, and a three-legged table and two broken chairs, are all I can see. And here live a father and mother and five children—*just* live, and that is all. Sin and misery, want and woe, are here and all around; and in such an air, sickness is sure to be.

Digitized by Google

The parents are at the gin-shop, and the poor children—cold, hungry, neglected, and untaught, brought up amid sights and sounds of sin—what comfort, what hope for *them?*

The place looks like one seldom visited by strangers—and this room such as none used to better things would come to by choice. Yet there is One greater, richer, and better than all the great and rich and good of this world, who does not despise this court and this room. His eye is upon it now. He sees all this sin and want and misery, and pities those He sees. It is no unknown place to *Him;* there is not a room His eye does not see into, not a man, woman, or child but He cares for. Miserable as they are, He feels for them. He thought of them when they did not think of Him; He told His messengers to carry the good news not only into the streets, but also into the "*lanes* of the city," so that the worst and poorest may hear it. Oh that they would listen to His voice!

And now let us leave the great city, and go out into the country. We are not sorry to turn away from the close courts, and leave the busy streets behind us, and breathe the fresh country air, and we step briskly along the road. But who is this we are going to meet? His step is slow, his figure bent, his clothes old and worn, and he carries something on his back, with a covering over it; he has a look of want and weariness, and, as he gets near, we see that he is a travelling musician, an organ-grinder. Poor man! few know the highways so well as he; he spends his life on them. Poor lone man! who cares for the organ-grinder? Every day he toils along the road with his load on his back, from town to town, and from village to village. He seems to have no friend; here and there a passer-by may look kindly at him, and pay him for his tune, as he stands patiently grinding away in the street; but then he goes his way, and the organ-man sees him no more. There he stands alone; a ring of boys and girls may be round him, but still he is *alone:* if you meet him on the road, he is alone still: none seem more friendless than he. And yet the poor musician has a *soul,* and that soul is precious in the sight of God. Toiling along the road, or standing patiently in the street, wet in winter, or weary and dusty in summer, this poor man, the man of the highways, is not overlooked by God. There is a message for *him,* too, a direct message from God, an invitation from the Lord of all; for He said, "Go out into the *highways,* and compel them to come in." Is there none that will give this message? Is there no kind Christian that will stop him on the road, and tell him how gracious God is?

The organ-grinder pursues his way to the great city, and we turn out of the high road, and walk along pleasant green lanes. Soon we lose all traces of bustle and traffic; no wheels pass this way, no dwelling is near, all is quiet and retired. But see! what smoke is that rising by the tall hedge in the distance along the lane? The spot is soon reached, and we see that a party of tramps have taken up their quarters under shelter of the hedge. Their lean horse is grazing near the caravan, which serves both for house and carriage; and, round a fire of sticks, is gathered a party of men, women and children. They may not be gipsies, but

Digitized by Google

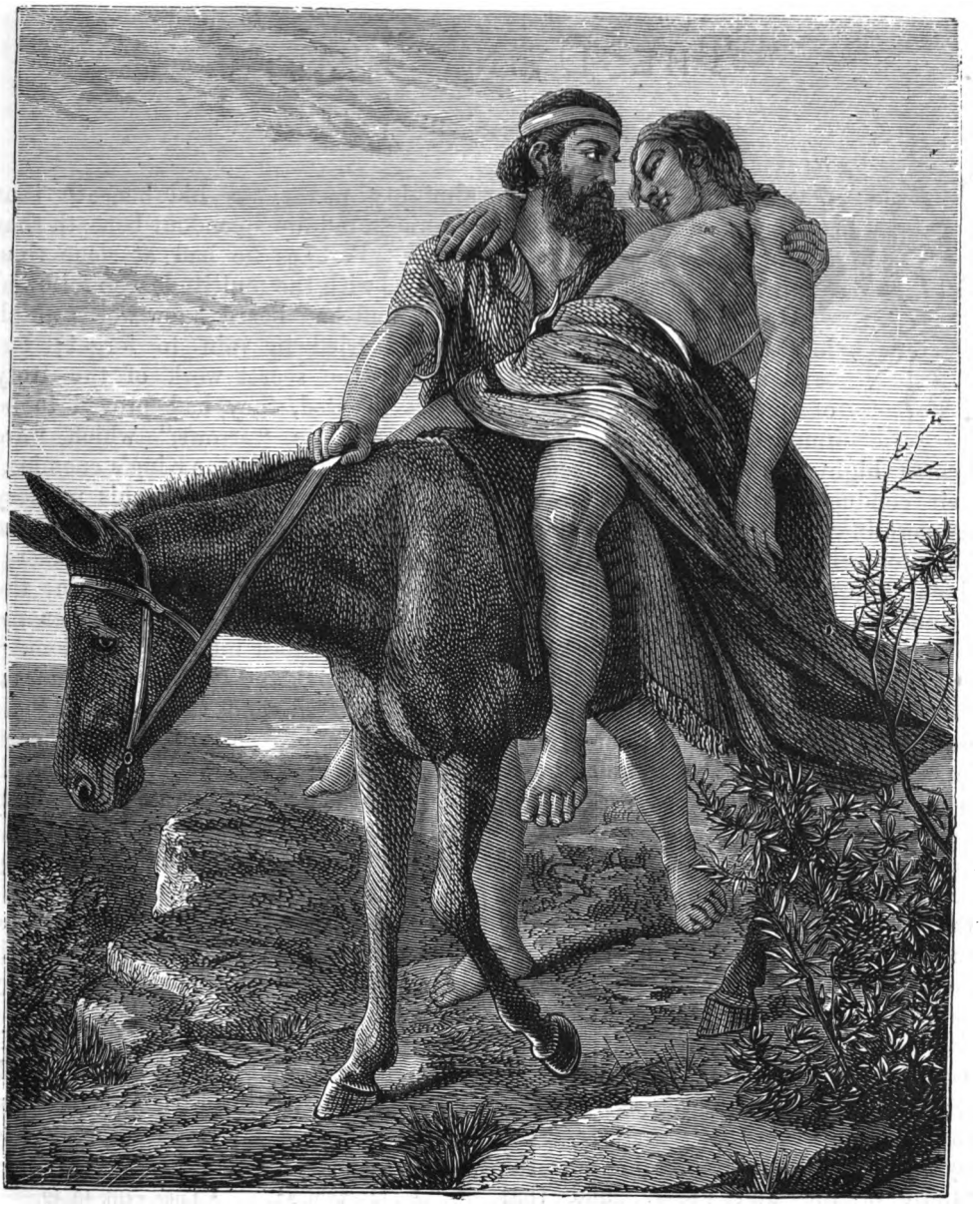
they lead a gipsy life; the men follow no regular employment, the women have little household work to occupy them, and the children—alas! what can the children do but grow up to be like their parents over again? It is not very plain how they live; but people do say that the victuals they are cooking were never bought, and certainly hen-roosts and sometimes dwelling-houses suffer when they come into the neighbourhood. They have no settled abode, their covered cart is the only house they have, and the hedgerow their only home. They lead an outcast, wandering life; the regular inhabitants are by no means glad to see their caravan appear, and often are they warned away when about to stop for the night. Their hand may be against other men, but certainly the hand of most men is against them in return. Yet they, too, have souls to be lost or saved. Not a dark-faced gipsy, nor a hedgerow tramp, not a midnight prowler, but must live for ever, happy or miserable. God cares for them; even for such as these He has a special message. His love comes, as it were, outside the city, turns off from the highway, and seeks them out under the hedgerow. For He said to His messengers, "Go out into the highways and *hedges*, and compel them to come in."

This SUPPER, to which all were invited —the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind—all, both bad and good, means the blessings of the GOSPEL; of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ to every one who believes in Him. The message that God would have carried to *all* is this—that Jesus Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, and that God will freely pardon *all* who come to Him through Christ.

Reader, God sends you this message. Whoever you are, and whatever you are —low, poor, miserable, cast off by all, sunk in sin, living by the wages of iniquity, to *you* is the word of this salvation sent! A supper is prepared, and *you* are invited to the gospel feast—*salvation*. God calls you, Jesus Christ invites you —let this be enough. There may be a thousand things to keep you away; but let this be enough to make you come, that God calls you, that JESUS CHRIST invites you. He who came to seek that which was lost, seeks *you;* He who sent His message of grace and love into the streets and lanes, the highways and hedges, sends it to *you:* yes, *you*, lost and miserable as you may be. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from *all* sin." Come, then, poor sinner! Ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit, that you may come to God by Jesus Christ! He will not turn you away—His own words are, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Come—your life depends on it; if you do not come, you are *lost;* if you come, you will be *saved. Just as you are*, come to JESUS.

Digitized by Google

THE DYING THIEF.



Digitized by Google

THE DYING THIEF.



MANY centuries ago, Judea abounded with robbers. An ancient writer tells us that, when Herod the Great had finished building the temple, forty thousand men were thrown out of employment, and a large number of these labourers became highwaymen. A specimen of their conduct is given in Luke x. 30: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." There was, probably, many a traveller who was treated as this man was, but whose moans were not heard from the desolate road by any good Samaritan, and who was therefore left to die. The robbers were everywhere regarded with terror for their habits of violence and crime.

A thief, perhaps one of these robbers, was one day brought to trial, found guilty, and sentenced to be crucified; and an event took place on that occasion which will be memorable through eternity. At that same time, on the same spot, the Lord Jesus Christ died upon the cross for the sins of the world. The unhappy thief apparently knew that the mysterious Sufferer at his side was the "Lord of life and glory," and that almighty power was hid beneath that weakness, infinite splendour beneath that shame. Perhaps he had at some time mingled with the multitude who followed Jesus, and had heard a few words which he had tried in vain to forget; but through the secret work of the Holy Spirit of God, they had proved to be some of those "arrows," which "are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies," and they were rankling in his memory still. Perhaps he had seen some instance of Immanuel's wonderful love to sinners; therefore, turning his gaze upon the Saviour, he said, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."[1]

That cry evidently sprang from *a consciousness of sin* and *sorrow for it*.[2] It came from a broken and contrite heart. That moment was crowded with recollections of sin. He felt that he was lost, and he cried out earnestly for salvation.

That prayer was also an *expression of faith*. He doubtless believed that Jesus was able to save the greatest sinners; he knew that He was willing; and though it is an act of great moment and solemnity to commit the soul to another, that He may save it, and keep it, and conduct it to paradise, he did so; he gave himself up to Christ, resting with all the stress of his spirit on His tender mercy and mighty power.

[1] Luke xxiii. 42. [2] Luke xxiii. 40–42.

Digitized by Google

The Lord Jesus heard him, and answered him, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise."

This wondrous transaction, and the gracious declaration of our Lord, showed that if we reach heaven it must be by *faith in Him, and not by our own good works.* A man in the temple at Jerusalem, a Pharisee, was once overheard saying these words: "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican."

The dying thief could not say this; yet he was saved. When he breathed his earnest prayer to Jesus, he could not make any good works which he had already performed his ground of hope; for, up to that point, his life had been one sad history of sin; he could not make good works which he intended to perform his plea for mercy, for it was then too late; he could not lift a finger, nor stir a step, and the chill of death was creeping to his heart. He was saved in another way; and whatever that way was, we can only be saved in the same. God has not two ways of saving sinners. "I am the way," says Jesus.[1]—"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."[2] "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.—For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.—Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

It is also manifest, from the immediate declaration by Jesus of the safety of this dying thief, that He is willing to forgive us *directly we believe on Him.* There was instant forgiveness to the thief. In the evening of that day he was with Christ in paradise. There he is now, a spirit clothed in light; and while we are speaking, he is joining those who sing, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." The reader may be disposed to ask, "How long, I pray, have I to wait for an answer? How long will it be before the forgiveness comes?" Look at the case of the man who asked for mercy of the dying Saviour, and see that mercy comes the very moment that we seek it in the right way, even if at that moment it should not be fully realised by ourselves. Salvation is to be had *now.*

It is cheering also to learn from the words of Jesus to the thief, that *none should despair of salvation.* If we had only been assured in a general way that Christ died for sinners, some persons might say, "Yes, He died for sinners, but not for such a sinner as I have been; there may be mercy for others, but there is none for me." But by saving a man who had been infamous for reckless and desperate vice—and saving him, too, at the very time He was offering up that sacrifice which should avail for the sins of the world—every time we look to Calvary we see not only Christ, but the forgiven thief who was soon to be with Him in paradise, a trophy of His almighty grace. And Christ shows us by an act far more eloquent than words, that He will indeed save the chief of sinners, if the chief of sinners will but trust Him.

[1] John xiv. 6. [2] Acts iv. 12.

Digitized by Google

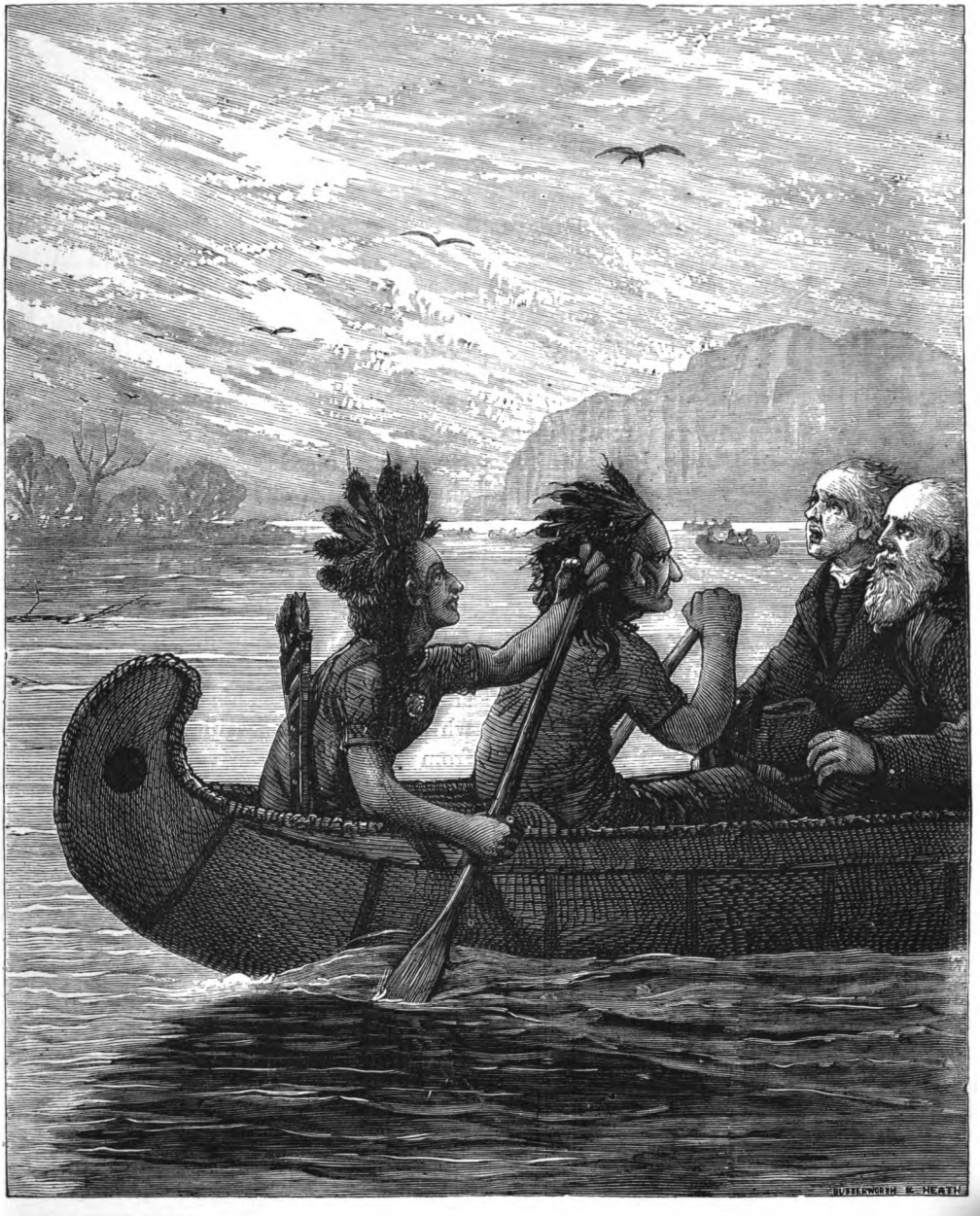
A short time since, a city missionary was visiting one of the alleys of London for the purpose of speaking to its inhabitants about the "Friend of sinners." He heard that in one of the attics there was a dying thief. He went upstairs, and saw stretched on a poor pallet a youth far advanced in disease. He bent over him, and began to say a few simple words, hoping that he might win him to Christ. To his surprise, it was soon evident that he was no stranger to the "truth as it is in Jesus." He had recently been discharged from a prison, which had been to him "none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven;" for there he had been taught to read the Holy Scriptures, and through the Spirit of God they had made "him wise unto salvation." Now, therefore, the name of Jesus seemed to light up that countenance with animation, which death was beginning to cover with its shade. He mentioned several sentences from the Divine Word, which gave him peculiar comfort. "Have you a favourite verse of any hymn?" asked the missionary, and the youth repeated this:

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
Oh, may I there, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away."

And should not the animating fact of pardon to the thief keep us from *deferring the great concern of our salvation to a future day?* "I will pray to Jesus when I am dying," some one may say, "hoping He will save me as He did the man who was dying at His side." Oh, let such a man beware! As an old writer has well remarked: "There is one instance in the Scriptures of forgiveness in the dying hour, that none may despair; *there is but one, that none may presume!*" You may die suddenly; you may die in pain so acute, as to make it impossible to give your thoughts attentively to anything but your own suffering. If you neglect application to Christ until the last sickness of life, you have reason to fear a worse evil than that of distracting anxiety—the evil of deceitful peace. How are you sure that you shall feel any wish to seek the Saviour then? How are you sure that if you stifle convictions now, you will not be past feeling then? "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Delay not another hour, for who can tell what even an hour may bring forth? Satan would suggest that you should delay. He knows that frequently the longer we hesitate, the more we are inclined to hesitate. He knows that you are not likely to have "a more convenient season" for listening to the call of Christ than the present, and therefore he does not even tempt you to say "I will never seek salvation," but only "I will not seek it *now*." The Friend of sinners cries, "Turn to Me to-day." "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Turn to Him, believe in Him, and you will be prepared for life; or if you should die at once, you would be prepared for death, and this day you too would be with Him in paradise.

Digitized by Google

The Lamb of God.



Digitized by Google

The Lamb of God.



In the earliest days of revelation, men were taught that they would worship God acceptably by offering sacrifice, and the victim they were most frequently required to present, was a lamb. A lamb was the first sacrifice mentioned in history.[1] Abraham was accustomed to provide a lamb for an offering.[2] The Jews were commanded to celebrate the anniversary of their deliverance from the stroke of the destroying angel on the eve of their departure from Egypt by sacrificing a lamb.[3] A lamb was offered every day in the morning and evening sacrifice, in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple; and it is remarkable that when in the fulness of time Jesus Christ appeared, He was proclaimed under the title of "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."[4]

Jesus was so called because *He is the true Sacrifice for sin.* God has declared that death must be the consequence of sin. Man has sinned; how then can the sinner live for ever, and at the same time that Word be true which has said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die?" The answer to this question is given in the gospel; there we are told that, "He was made sin for us who knew no sin." He so loved sinners, that He took their place: "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." And for that iniquity He died: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."[1] He suffered what we deserved to suffer, that His death might be instead of our death; and thus while the spirit of the law is fulfilled which made death the penalty of sin, the sinner who believes in Jesus shall never die.[2] This is the Sacrifice to which all other sacrifices pointed, and from which they derived their meaning and importance; for an inspired writer tells us, "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."[3] The lamb offered by the ancient worshipper was only the type of his Saviour; the act of presenting it being a confession that he deserved to die, and at the same time a plea that he might be forgiven for the sake of the Heavenly Lamb. In every age it must be said that men are "not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as

[1] Gen. iv. 4. [2] Gen. xxii. 7.
[3] Ex. xii. [4] John i. 29.

[1] Isa. liii. 5. [2] John xi. 26. [3] Heb. x. 4.

Digitized by Google

of a lamb without blemish and without spot."[1]

We are therefore called upon to rely for our everlasting safety and happiness, with faith and confidence, on this Sacrifice. When John the Baptist cried "Behold the Lamb!" he meant "Look to Him as your Saviour." And the Lord Jesus Christ showed the infinite benefit connected with His offering for the sins of man, when He said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."[2] By this we see that to "behold" the Saviour is to *believe* on Him. Just as the Israelite, by looking to the brazen serpent, expressed his sole trust in the remedy which God had appointed; so when we are required to "behold the Lamb," it is meant that we should place the most simple trust on Jesus Christ alone. Therefore no sinner should be discouraged from looking to the Saviour, for He has issued universal invitations, and is at this moment saying, wherever His Word is conveyed, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."[3]

A knowledge and love of the Lamb of God will always work a change in our lives. By faith we are united to Christ; and "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." True faith in Christ, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, effects a change in the character. The drunkard becomes sober, the swearer prayerful, the infidel forsakes the speculations of infidelity for the oracles of God. If no such change as this is effected, there is no saving faith; for, Jesus Christ came to save us not *in* our sins, but *from* our sins. All who believe have the assistance of the Holy Spirit; and through this agency applying the truth to our minds, when we look to Christ, we become like Him; "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."[1]

The following is an interesting instance of these effects produced on the minds of some North American Indians, when they were made acquainted with the account the gospel gives of "the Lamb of God." The story was related by one of their chiefs. When this chief was of the age of twelve or fifteen, he went on a war expedition with his father. The tribe were successful, having killed and scalped great numbers of their enemies. They returned, and obtained a keg of whisky to celebrate their triumph. They sat down on the shore of one of the vast American lakes. There they poured out some of the whisky as an offering to the evil spirit—the god of war; and they were about to commence drinking, when one of the Indian scouts came up hastily to the old chief, and whispered something in his ear. He started, and told some of his men to cover the keg with a blanket, to prevent it from being seen. Looking round, he saw two grave and venerable men coming by the border of the lake. He knew them to be Christian missionaries: they came to him, and addressed him. They told him the story of Christ, who came from heaven not to destroy, but to save His enemies—not to kill them, but to give His life for theirs. The

[1] 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. [2] John iii. 14. [3] Isa. xlv. 22.

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Digitized by Google

old chief threw his blanket over his head. His son noticed that his strong frame was convulsed; and, looking under the blanket, saw for the first time in his life a tear rolling down his cheek. And what excited this deep interest? It was the story of "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" and the same truth produced the same effect on all the war party. The missionaries said, "Will you go to our station, that you may know more about the love of the Great Spirit?" The tribe agreed to go. It was about nine o'clock in the morning, and the sun was shining with beautiful clearness over the surface of the lake, when the old chief, his son, and the two missionaries got into the first canoe, and then the whole of the war party followed in other canoes, forming a continuous line. As they were rowing over the lake, one of the missionaries began singing this hymn.

"Jesus, my all, to heaven is gone
He whom I fixed my hopes upon
His track I'll see, and I'll pursue
The narrow way till Him I view.

This is the way I long had sought,
And mourned because I found it not,—
Till late I heard my Saviour say,
'Come hither, soul! I am the way.'

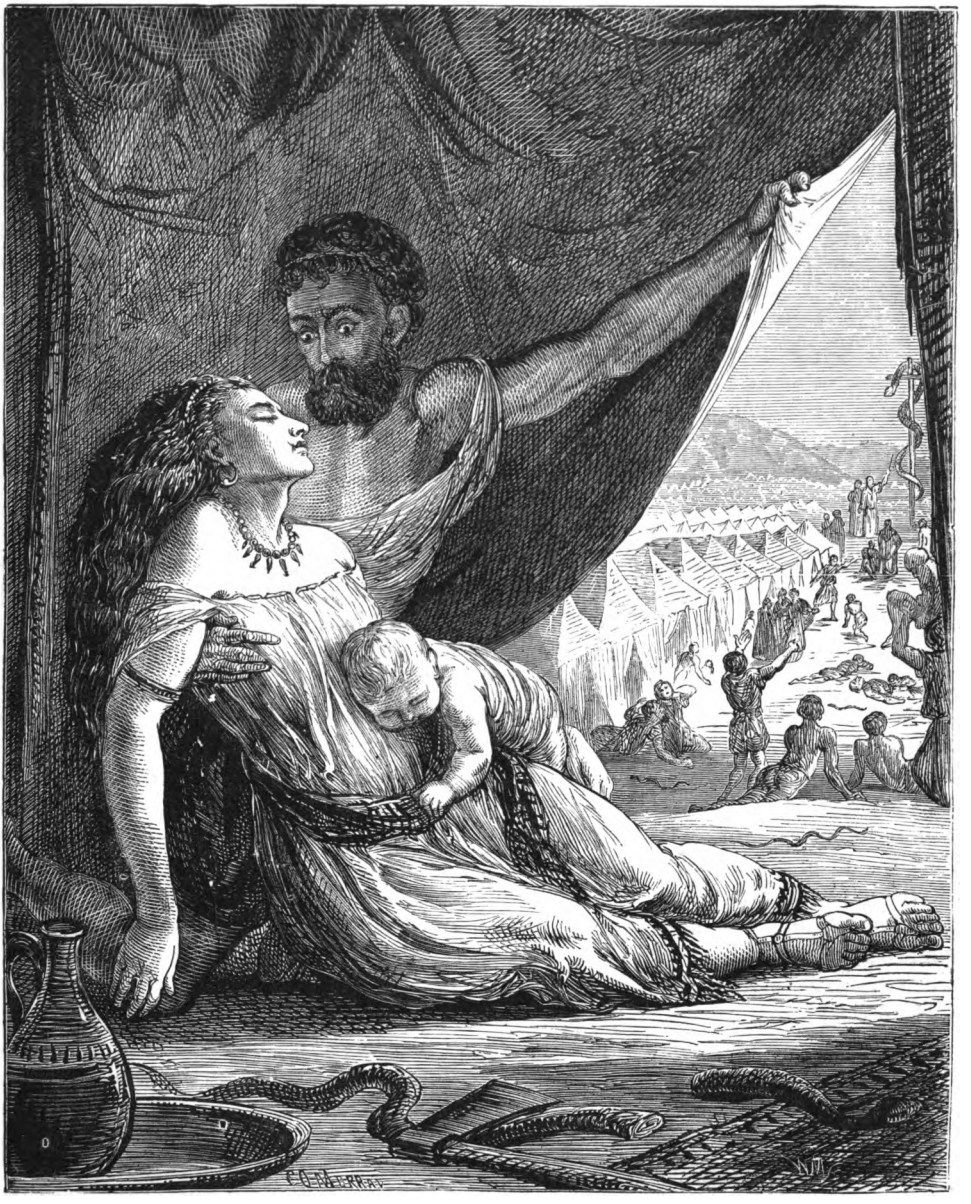
Lo, glad I come; and Thou, blest Lamb,
Wilt now receive me as I am;
My sinful self to Thee I give,
Nothing but love shall I receive."

The Indians understood enough of the English language to get the meaning of the hymn; and they were so interested with these new thoughts, that they were not satisfied without the missionaries singing the hymn over several times. When they had crossed the lake, they had to travel two days before they reached the missionary station. The chief entered it alone, and directed his tribe to wait at a distance until he should return to them. When they had waited for him three days, they came and listened at the gates, and heard a sound of distress. "Oh!" said the young chief, "I heard my father's voice as I never heard it before, crying for mercy. I rushed in with my companions, and found him on his knees praying, asking the Great Spirit to send down converting grace into his heart. As soon as he saw me, he clasped me in his arms, and we began to pray together." The result was that, at length, both father and son rejoiced in the hope of mercy; and when they went, at the head of the tribe, back to their native village, they told the women and children who gathered round them the story of the Saviour. They had the hymn translated into their own language; portions of the New Testament were also translated. A delightful change took place in the spirit of the people; vice gave way to purity, and "the habitations of cruelty" became abodes of peace. The wife of the venerable chief shared with him the grace of life; and when at length she died, these were among her last words:

"Lo, glad I come; and Thou blest Lamb,
Wilt now receive me as I am;
My sinful self to Thee I give,
Nothing but love shall I receive."

Digitized by Google

Don't Despair of a Cure.



"AS MOSES LIFTED UP THE SERPENT IN THE WILDERNESS, EVEN SO MUST THE SON OF MAN BE LIFTED UP."

Digitized by Google

Don't Despair of a Cure.



Some time ago the writer's attention was drawn to these words on a hand-bill, "Don't despair of a cure." It was the advertisement of some medicine. Men labouring, it may have been, under consumption, were entreated, although they had tried every other remedy, although the doctors had given them over, although they were in the last stage of illness, by no means to despair till they had tried this sovereign cure.

The expression called up this thought: This is just what the gospel promises—just what the gospel *does* for poor perishing souls. It cures otherwise incurable cases. Yonder medicine, no doubt, is over-rated, and what is said of it very likely untrue. Not so the gospel of Christ. Who can over-rate it? It is an infallible remedy. This, this is the medicine sinners need. Whatever your spiritual disease, till you have tried the grace of Jesus, oh, don't despair of a cure.

Reader! kindly bear with us while we press this heavenly medicine on your attention. If you have not hitherto received it, a fatal disease, slowly or quickly, is working eternal death within your soul. Sin is your disease. Can it be that you do not know you are ill? Alas! this is a symptom of the plague of sin. All men by nature labour under it. It is a deadly hereditary complaint, derived from our first father Adam; a distemper that ever grows worse and worse, fretted and inflamed by our daily transgressions. It taints all men from their birth; for we read, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."[1] In this day of grace strive for a knowledge of your diseased state. Oh that the Holy Spirit may now convince you of sin! It is His work. A heart that is at enmity with God, that does not love Jesus, that has not experienced the grace of the Holy Spirit, that regards not the preaching of the cross, that indulges in sin, that loves the friendship of the world, that trusts in its own good works, manifests the general symptoms of this awful disease.

But it may be you have long felt your wretched condition, have groaned under a conscience ill at ease, and found all the boasted remedies of the world unavailing. Self-indulgence perhaps lulled you for a time, but you could not banish the startling cry, "Flee from the wrath to come." Riches filled your thoughts for a time; but they too, you found, were vanity and vexation of spirit, and the summons sent to the rich man, "This night thy soul

[1] Rom. v. 12.

Digitized by Google

shall be required of thee," confused and saddened your calculations. Fame and honour promised you relief for a season; you delighted in the goodwill of your neighbours; all men spoke well of you; but in your calmer moments of thought, those real hours of life, the truth of God's Word would speak out, "Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish."[1] Your heart-ache was not touched. The cancer still corroded your soul; and you bethought yourself, "My life is withering under a strange unknown disease. My springs of health are drying up. I must adopt stronger measures." So you betook yourself to some grave moral physician, who told you that by abstaining from every indulgence, by a strict system of diet, by carefully husbanding your strength, and by diligent daily exercise, you would soon recover the natural health of your constitution. Alas, you were miserably disappointed! Yours was no surface complaint, but a hidden deadly plague! It preyed upon your vitals. You were "without strength" to follow his directions. You wanted not only new rules for life, but life itself,—new life. You needed some mighty medicine to grapple with your devouring disease. You asked, but you found not. Men had healed your hurt slightly, saying, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace."[2] You were like that poor woman "which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse."[3] Is this your state, unhappy friend? Have others given you up? have you given yourself up? Yet, we pray you, don't despair of a cure.

There is one remedy you have not tried, sure and certain, close at hand, free to all. It was planned by the God who made you; it was proclaimed by His only begotten Son; it is applied by the Almighty Spirit. God said to Israel of old, "Thus saith the Lord, Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous;" and again, "Thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity."[1] Could there be a more hopeless case? does it not resemble yours? Yet be comforted; for what with men is impossible, is possible with God; for, hark, the Lord continues, "I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord."[2] Only come to Jesus, the good Physician: for He says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Tell Him all your case; or, if words fail you, listen to Him while He describes it in truer terms than you could find: "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."[3] Is not this your condition? Answer truly, "Yes, Lord, yes;"—for lo! He proceeds: "The Lord hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised."[4]

Does hope begin to spring up in your

[1] Ps. xlix. 12. [2] Jer. vi. 14.
[3] Mark v. 25, 26.

[1] Jer. xxx. 12, 15. [2] Jer. xxx. 17.
[3] Isa. i. 5, 6. [4] Luke iv. 18

Digitized by Google

heart, and with eagerness do you ask, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Mark well this answer, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved."[1] The Israelites, when bitten by the fiery serpents, if they looked upon the serpent of brass, *lived*. So shall it be with you. For "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."[2]

Well has it been said, What the eye is to the body, faith is to the soul. The Good Physician stands before you. He says, "I was wounded for your transgressions, I was bruised for your iniquities, and with My stripes (or bruises) you are healed.[3] Poor sinner, poor sufferer, you deserved to die—to die for ever! But I suffered and I died in your stead. The punishment is endured, the price is paid. I am now the Physician of dying souls. Look on Me—believe—be healed."

Reader! it is a solemn thought that your soul is either under the healing treatment of this Good Physician, or else wasting away under a fatal disease. We will tell you some Bible marks of a healed soul. It is completely changed. Leprosy is a picture of sin. When Naaman, the Syrian leper, was cleansed, his flesh came again like the flesh of a little child. And Jesus says of our souls, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." A healed soul, under a sense of sin and utter ruin, embraces the salvation of Jesus, believes in His death as the ground of pardon, and in His righteousness as the ground of its acceptance. It is washed, it is sanctified, it lives to God. True, indeed, even a healed soul, while in a body of sin, must confess, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." Often it has, under the depression of spiritual weakness, to complain, "Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low."[1] Still it ever finds a "balm in Gilead," and a "physician there," and will be brought at length to that land of life where the inhabitant shall no more say, "I am sick."

But suppose, after searching inquiry, you come to the mournful conclusion—I have never truly brought my case to Jesus; a deadly disease is at work within me, and yet my eternal life is at stake. Still reader, there is hope for you; nay, there is certainty, if you will but apply to the good Physician. This paper brings good tidings to you from the God of love. *Don't despair of a cure.*

The good Physician is ever near you, ever ready, ever waiting, nay, inviting you to come. He offers His salvation "without money and without price;" and "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him."[2] Confide in this truth: and

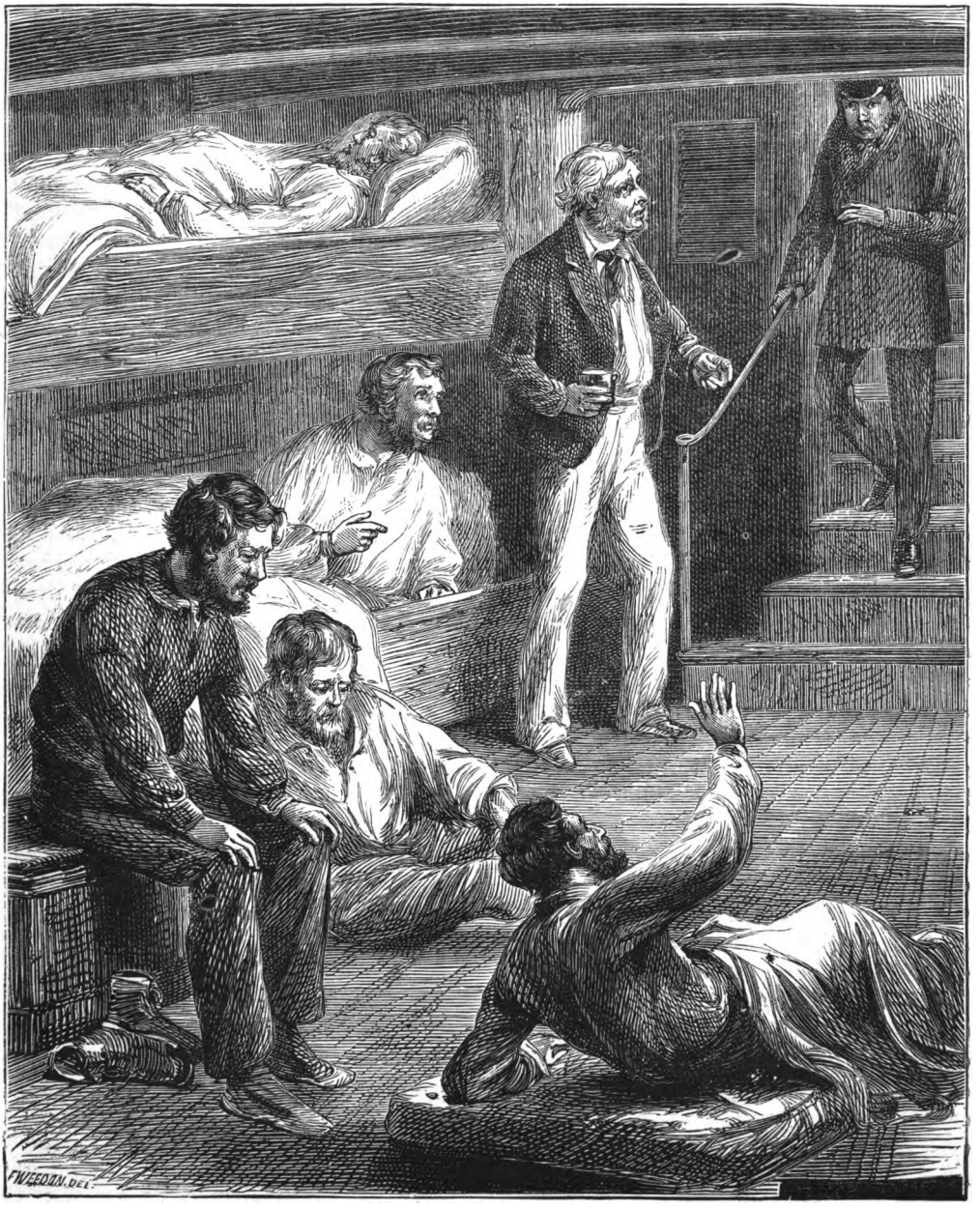
DON'T DESPAIR OF A CURE.

[1] Isa. xlv. 22. [2] John iii. 14, 15. [3] Isa. liii. 5.

[1] Ps. cxlii. 6 [2] Heb. vii. 25.

Digitized by Google

The Good Physician.



Digitized by Google

The Good Physician.

A VESSEL was pursuing its course between England and Africa. Among those on board was a young English surgeon, named Sidney Bernard. They had proceeded some distance on their voyage, when they met a ship, the *Eclair*, homeward bound. The unfortunate passengers had a mournful tale to relate. Fever was raging among them; many had died, many more were ill, and those who had escaped till then were filled with alarm at the terrible danger with which they were threatened. What rendered their position most appalling was, that they had no medical man on board. Mr. Bernard's heart was touched by the sad story, and, regardless of the danger of infection, he resolved to return to England in the *Eclair*, and devote himself to his suffering fellow-creatures. His efforts were successful; many were rescued from the death which seemed inevitable, and restored to health and strength. But still, when the ship reached our shores, the disease was not entirely subdued. The noble Bernard, however, still maintained his post; some doctor must be there, and since God had preserved him hitherto, he would not endanger another life; besides, he might take the contagion with him elsewhere. Alas! the fever attacked him, and the heroic young surgeon fell a victim to his generous and self-sacrificing exertions. What must have been the feelings of those who were thus raised up from the brink of the grave, when they found that their safety had been so dearly bought! Joy at their own preservation must have been saddened by deep grief for the loss of such a friend. Never could they forget what he had done in their behalf; and often, in after years, amidst the peace and security of happy homes, they would think with mingled thankfulness and sorrow of their benevolent deliverer. The name of Sidney Bernard must ever have been enshrined in their inmost hearts.

You are sure, reader, that such would have been your feelings, and doubtless you are right. You would, you must, ever have thought of him with love and admiration. You could not have rewarded such self-devotion with coldness and indifference. But yet, are you sure you have never acted a far more ungrateful part? Dreadful as was the fever which attacked the passengers on board the *Eclair*, you are suffering from a far more terrible disease, one which not only endangers your frail body, but which must, unless it be removed, ruin your immortal soul.

Everywhere around us, and within us, we see traces of sin, that fearful malady, which causes such misery now, and will

Digitized by Google

produce such awful consequences hereafter. The sinner's position is indeed most appalling; no unaided exertions of his own can effect a cure, and no mere human assistance can avail. Where, then, can he turn for help? Is there none to deliver? Yes, there is "balm in Gilead," there is a "physician there"—Jesus the Redeemer, "mighty to save."[1] Oh! it is wonderful to think that He, the Lord of life and glory—He by whom all things were made, and for whose pleasure they are and were created—He, before whom the highest archangel bows in lowly adoration, should have condescended to notice such sinful and polluted beings as we are.

But when we think of all the boundless love and compassion He has shown towards us, well may our hearts be filled with astonishment and gratitude. You know that, though "being in the form of God," and partaking of His "glory before the world was," "the Word," which "was God," "was made flesh and dwelt among us;" and this wondrous being, the Lord Jesus Christ, became a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" and "though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich." You know how, while in our fallen world, He "went about doing good,"[2] relieving every kind of suffering, healing bodily disease, and binding up the broken heart, restoring sight to the blind, and raising the dead to life. And you know how, at last, He "His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree," and shed His precious blood as a ransom for human guilt. And then, having thus redeemed us, He broke the barriers of the tomb, and ascended up on high, having triumphed over death and the grave. And now He ever liveth to make intercession for us, and to bestow the priceless blessings of salvation. Oh, boundless love! well may the courts of heaven echo with the anthems of angels and the hosannas of the redeemed.

But, reader, what return have you rendered for the Saviour's love? Alas, how many seem to regard it as an idle tale, a matter with which they have no personal concern! Perhaps you listen to the touching story of the Saviour's death, and your heart remains hard and unmoved; it wakes no thrill of gratitude and love, and you turn away with cold indifference. You would be indignant if any one supposed you could be guilty of such base ingratitude to an earthly friend; and will you, dare you, act thus to that dear Redeemer who has done so much more for you than the kindest, wisest, and most powerful human being could possibly do? Will you continue to trifle with the love of Jesus? Can you refuse to obey His gracious invitations, and to accept the remedy He has provided for you at such a cost? Believe me, this "is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life." Regardless of your danger, you are neglecting the only way of safety.

It would have been a touching and melancholy spectacle to have seen one of the poor fever-stricken sufferers on board the *Eclair*, in the wild ravings of delirium, turning away from the assistance which alone promised a cure; but it is far more mournful to see a human being trifling with the interests of his immortal

[1] Jer. viii. 22; Isaiah lxiii. 1.
[2] 2 Cor. viii. 9; Acts x. 38.

Digitized by Google

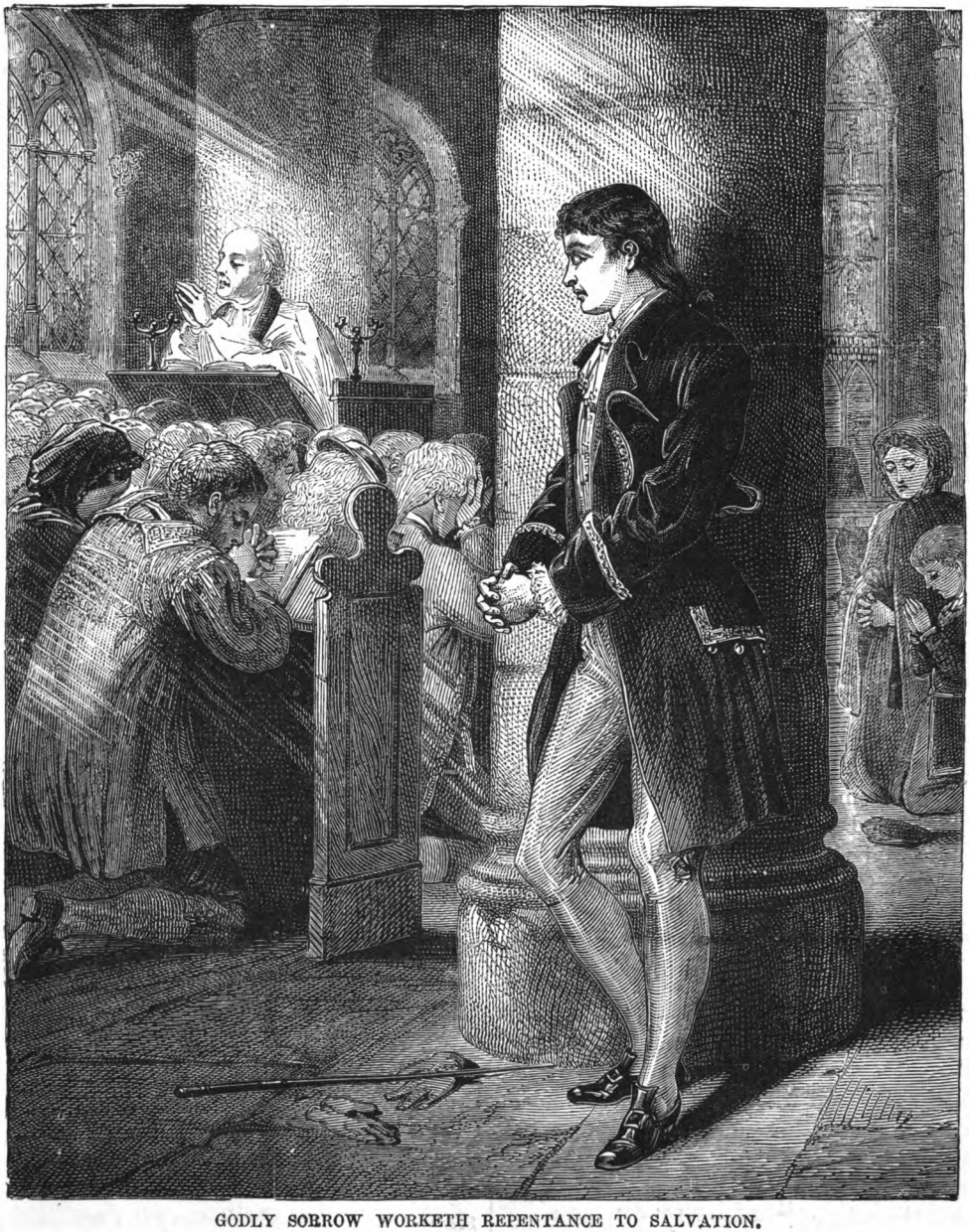
soul. Sin, like a fatal disease, is raging within him, and must, without some remedy, end in death—eternal death; and yet he will not seek the aid of the Great Physician who would save him. Oh, reader, if such is your position, delay no longer, wake to a sense of your peril, and go at once to Him, who when on earth said in compassion and sorrow, "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life."

He will not refuse to hear, for He received sinners, and said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Go, then, and tell Him all your wants, and He will supply all your need. Ask Him to pardon your many sins, and to wash them all away in His precious blood. Ask Him to clothe you in the spotless robe of His perfect righteousness, "which is through the faith of Christ." And ask Him to soften your hard, cold heart, and to give you the sanctifying influences of His Holy Spirit to purify your polluted and depraved nature, and to make you holy and happy. Do you still fear to approach Him? You need not tremble; He is the same loving Saviour now that He has ever been, willing to receive you, waiting to be gracious. Listen to His own encouraging promise, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Hear His cheering assurance, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." Hesitate no longer: go at once, this very day, to Jesus. Delay not; remember, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

And if, reader, you are trusting in this precious Saviour, how should your heart glow with gratitude to Him who loved you, and gave Himself for you! Pray to know more of His boundless love, and to feel more of its constraining influence in your daily life. You are not your own, but bought with a price, even the precious blood of Jesus; wherefore consecrate yourself entirely, body, soul, and spirit, to His service. Sinful and polluted as you now are, you shall one day enter the pearly gates of the celestial city, and tread its golden streets. There you shall join the radiant throng of angels and the redeemed around the throne in a song of praise to Him who loved you, and washed you from your sins in His own blood.

Reader, whoever you may be, may all your soul's diseases be healed by the Great Physician; and may we meet at last in the better land where pain, and sorrow, and death may never come; for in heaven no sin may enter. May we dwell there for ever with that precious Saviour whose love will then fill every heart. There "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Oh, glorious prospect! When we think of our sin and guilt, and the cloudless purity of heaven, well may we exclaim, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness." Let us trust our Great Physician now, that, in the realms of light, we may be with Him in whose "presence is fulness of joy," and at whose "right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

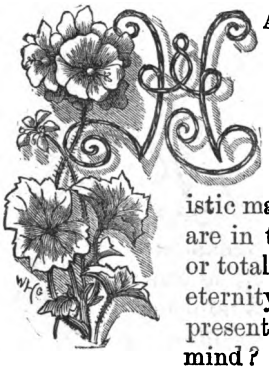
Digitized by Google



GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE TO SALVATION.

Digitized by Google

Evidences of Regeneration.



Have I been brought to see that eternal concerns are infinitely important? One of the characteristic marks of those "who are in the flesh," is great or total carelessness about eternity.—Is this the present frame of my mind? Or am I giving to the realities of the world to come my paramount attention? Have I been brought to feel that, as there is infinite misery to be avoided, and infinite good to be secured hereafter, the pursuit of pleasures—which can exist but for a moment, and the avoidance of evils—which at most can only continue for a season, and perhaps a very short one—should be made to give entire place to the desire of escaping hell, and rising to heaven? And *have* they given place to this desire? Have I been brought to feel that even the *lawful* gratifications of the present state are so worthless when compared with the blessings which eternity presents to our view, that they ought to be sacrificed without a moment's hesitation, should the sacrifice be necessary to secure the latter; and that its *unlawful* gratifications ought not to be tasted, or even thought of? Have I, in short, been brought to feel that the salvation of the soul is an object of such transcendant importance, that it should attract our supreme, and habitual, and exclusive attention to itself? And *does* it do this? If this be not the case with me, I am declared, by the Scriptures, to be "in the flesh, and cannot of course please God."

Have I been brought to entertain just apprehensions of the things of the Spirit of God? What are my conceptions of the Divine Being? Do I regard Him, habitually, as the ever-present Deity—abroad, around, within me; as privy to every deed I perform, every word I speak, every thought which arises in the secret recesses of my bosom? Do I contemplate Him as a being whose nature is infinitely averse to all kinds, and degrees, of moral pollution? Do I believe that justice, and holiness, and truth, are essential perfections of His character, and that He can no more act in opposition to these attributes than He can cease to exist? And does this view of His character appear glorious to *me?* What, again, are the conceptions I form in regard to the law of God? Do I consider it improperly strict, if not unjust, in requiring absolute perfection, and in pronouncing the sentence of condemnation against those who are the subjects of a single unhallowed desire? Or, am I

Digitized by Google

ready to acknowledge that the law of God is exactly what it *should* be? that it *ought* to extend to the thoughts and intents of the heart? That the evil of sin is so tremendously, so infinitely great, that the justice of God absolutely requires that the least violation of its precepts *should* expose the transgressor to everlasting destruction? What, again, are my views of myself? Do I fancy that I am rich, and increased in goods? Or, if disposed to admit that there is some defect in my moral constitution, am I reluctant to believe that it has become totally deranged? Do I hesitate to receive the testimony of God concerning the heart of man by nature, that it is evil, only evil, and that continually? Or, do I unfeignedly believe that "the carnal mind is enmity against God"—that the whole of the human family are by nature earthly, sensual, and devilish? What, further, are my views of the way of salvation? Do I indulge the hope of being able to atone for my own sins?—or, do I see that the free and sovereign grace of God must be the source of all my hopes of mercy?—that transgression has occasioned so wide, and vast, and apparently so irreparable a breach between man and his Maker, that even the goodness of God, unbounded and infinite as it is, can find no honourable channel through which it may flow to men, but the bitter agonies and death of His Son? And am I actually building upon this atonement, as the exclusive ground of a sinner's confidence before God?

Have the *views* I have been brought to entertain of the things of the Spirit of God, had the effect of drawing out my *affections* towards them, with a supreme degree of attachment? Have I been made to love all things that bear a character of moral excellence, and on account of the moral excellence by which they are adorned? What is the state of my heart towards God? Is He the object of my habitual thoughts, and of my supreme regard? Do I constantly meditate upon His character, perfections, and government? Do I love to contemplate His works, especially His work of works, the work of redemption, tracing it from the moment when the first promise of salvation beamed upon man, till the period of its full accomplishment, as the Saviour hung upon the cross? And then, borne forwards by faith and hope, do I anticipate the arrival of the time when all its blessings will be unveiled to my view in the mansions above? With regard to God, can I adopt the language of the psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee?" etc. Is He the sweet resting-place—the home of my affections, to whom, though they should wander for a season, they invariably return; while the language of my soul is, Here will I stay, and this shall be my rest for ever? What, again, is the state of my heart towards the Lord Jesus Christ? Is He, in my estimation, "fairer than the children of men," "the chiefest among ten thousand," "yea, the altogether lovely?" Do I conceive of every blessing as the effect of His mediation, and while partaking of the gifts, does my soul rise in adoring gratitude to Him through whose gracious hands they have been communicated? What, further, is the state of my heart towards that "one family of which God is the Father, and Jesus Christ the Elder Brother?" Do I love its members "with

Digitized by Google

a pure heart fervently?" Do I love them because they bear the image of Christ, and do I love them "not in word only, but in deed and in truth?" What is the state of my heart towards the Word of God? Is it more precious to me than the gold of Ophir? Can I say, with David, "Oh how I love Thy law! it is my meditation all the day?" Do I love it for the discoveries it gives of the Divine character and law, of the plan of mercy through Jesus Christ, and of the boundless and everlasting blessings which flow to the world in consequence of His mission, and death? And, consequently, is my habitual perusal of it not regarded as a task, but engaged in with feelings more allied to those of the miser when surveying his secret hoard of gold, or of the half-starved wretch who is sent to a plentiful table? What, finally, is the state of my heart in reference to the worship and ordinances of God? Can I say, with the psalmist, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord for ever?" "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! my soul longeth for the courts of the Lord."

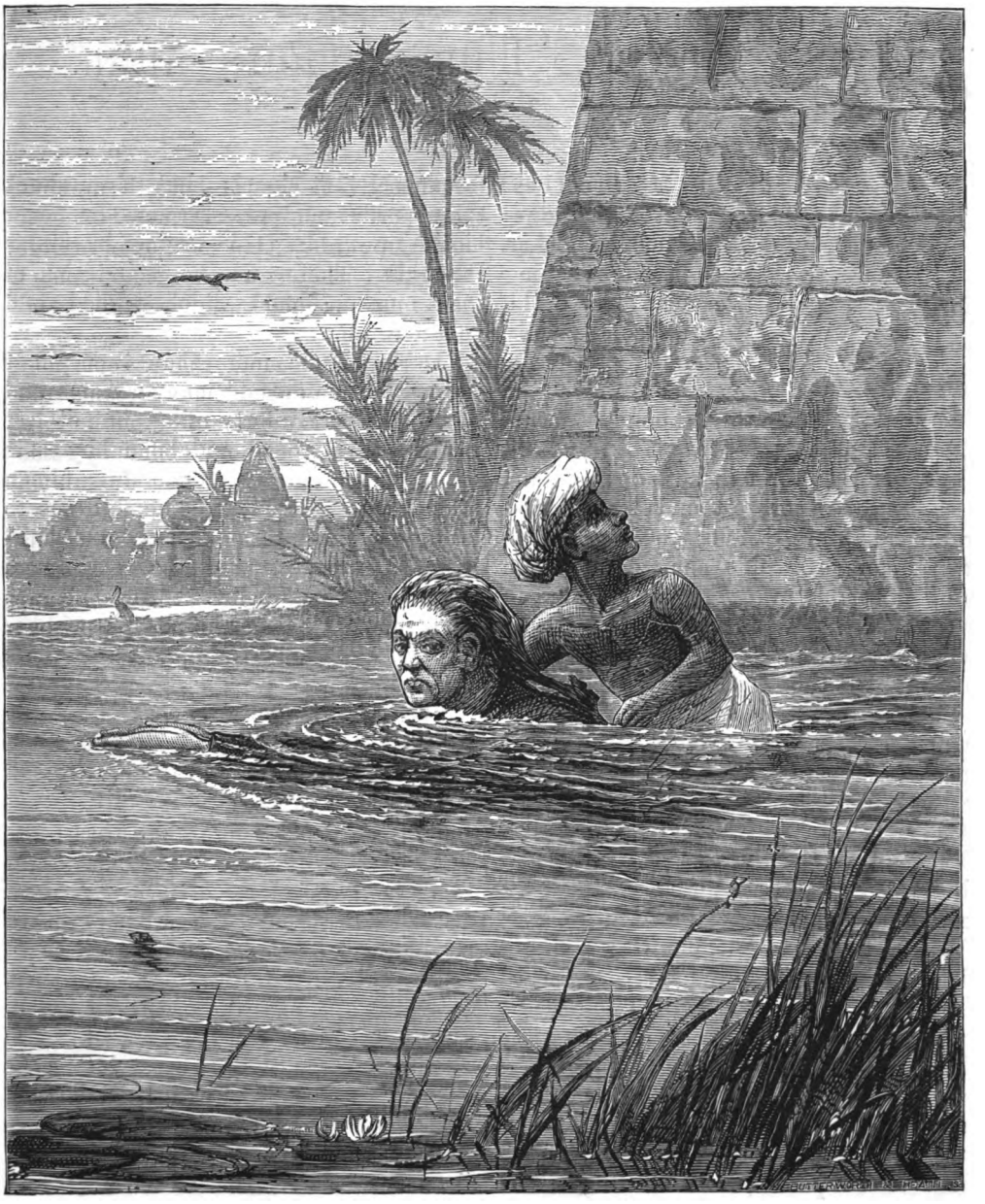
Has my will been brought into a state of habitual subjection to the Divine will? Do I fret, and murmur, at the allotments of Divine Providence concerning me, saying, "Why were not wealth, and honour, and splendour, given to me, as well as to others, who certainly deserve them no better?" Or, have I so deep a consciousness of my own unworthiness of the least of all God's mercies, and so perfect a conviction of His unerring wisdom, and unspeakable goodness, that I am sensible I ought to be content; and that it is my earnest desire, and habitually successful endeavour, "in whatever state I am, therewith to be content?" Do I habitually rebel against God, when He lays His hand upon me—stretches me upon the bed of affliction—withers some shade-giving gourd? Ah! these are the seasons which, like the blast of the assayer's furnace, try the character of what sort it is. At periods like these do I walk resignedly, under the burden which the hand of God lays upon me?

Am I yielding cheerful, and implicit, and habitual obedience to the commands of God? Let me not forget that any other evidence I may conceive myself to possess that I am born again, must be insufficient, if this evidence be wanting. "Show me," said the apostle James, "thy faith without thy works;" "perform," as though he had said, "the impossible task, if you can;" "and I will show thee my faith by my works." "By their fruits," said One who is greater than James, "shall ye know them." "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."

While the reader is putting these questions to his own conscience, let him address God, in the language of supplication, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Digitized by Google

CONVERTED; OR, "THIS IS GOD'S MAN."



HE TOOK THE BOY ON HIS BACK AND SWAM ACROSS THE RIVER.

Digitized by Google

Converted; or, "This is God's Man."



How a reckless sailor, a confirmed infidel, a pleasure-seeking man of the world, became a holy and useful Christian, must be worth the knowing. James Wilson (born in 1760) passed through sufferings of the severest and most extraordinary nature, without the least beneficial change in his character. When England and France were at war in India, his vessel was captured, and he was taken prisoner. The French admiral, bribed by the cruel Mahratta chief, Hyder Ali, consented to transfer his prisoners of war into the hands of that tyrant. And Captain Wilson resolved to attempt his escape from the fort of Cuddalore, in which he was confined. The ramparts of the fort were forty feet high, and at one part were washed by a river. Desperate as the venture was, Wilson hoped to be able with a single leap to spring into the river, and thus break the force of the fall. But he had miscalculated the distance, and almost lost his life. Recovering from the shock which he sustained, he took his Bengalee servant boy on his back, and swam across the river. Other wide and rapid streams had to be passed, and death seemed frequently at hand; but throughout these perils and preservations he never looked upwards. God was not in all his thoughts. There was no recognition of that unseen hand which girded and guarded him.

During little more than twenty-four hours, Wilson crossed many streams and travelled nearly forty miles, but at last was seized, stripped, and bound by some of Hyder's cavalry. The Mussulman officer into whose hands he fell was so struck by his prisoner's feats and hair-breadth escapes, that he exclaimed, "This is God's man!" And he was right, though neither he nor his prisoner understood the real import of those memorable words.

Weary and footsore, exhausted by fatigue, his skin blistered by the scorching sun, and, worse than all, heart and hope failing him, the poor captive was driven back to Cuddalore, and thrust into a dark and loathsome cell. After a night of misery, he was dragged out, chained to another prisoner, and, nearly famished and naked, he commenced a march of some five hundred miles to Seringapatam. Traversing arid plains beneath an Indian sky, goaded by a cruel driver through the day, and at night thrust into some crowded and often pestilential prison-house, he at length reached the lion's lair, where twenty-two months of untold suffering awaited him. Periodically ex-

Digitized by Google

posed to tropical rains, with no covering save a few rags; his only bed the bare earth, often sodden with moisture and reeking with filth; and surrounded by the dying and the dead, he dragged out his existence, and tenaciously clung to it, as, one by one, the other prisoners sank beneath the weight of woe. Yet, in all his suffering and sorrow, his heart never turned to God for comfort.

Nor was he moved to seek after God by the mercy which preserved his life. Death seemed at hand on one occasion. His body was so distended by dropsy, that his iron chains were buried in the swollen flesh. In this crisis of his life the usual allowance of rice was one day changed for another grain, and he was induced by his feverish thirst to drink the water in which it had been boiled. The effect was remarkable and unexpected. In a few hours, the worst symptoms of his disease were mitigated, the dropsy began to subside, and a ray of hope once more shot across the gloom. He was indeed "God's man," though he knew it not, nor gave Him the glory of his deliverance.

When deliverance came at last, out of one hundred and fifty-three prisoners only thirty-two survived. But Wilson left his prison as hardened and ungodly as he was when he entered it. Never once from the depths of his distress had he called upon the Lord; and now on his release he gave God no thanks.

During the succeeding year and a half, Captain Wilson passed through many perils; but was so successful in his trading that he was, at the end of that period, in a position to return to England with the means of future independence. On his homeward voyage he resisted the endeavours of a good man to bring Christian truth to bear on his conscience by avowing himself an infidel; and for two years after he sought happiness in the cultivation of his garden and in the sports of the field at Horndean, near Portsea. The Divine mercy, which had watched over him so long, was now, however, about to bring him "to himself," and to make him truly "God's man."

Among the inhabitants of Horndean there was a retired captain of Marines, named Sims, a Christian man. Pained by the irreligion and infidelity of his neighbour, Captain Sims strove to bring him to the Saviour; but his appeals to the word of God and to his own experience had no force with a man who denied the truth of the one and the reality of the other. The first effectual assault on his infidelity was made by Captain Sims's pastor, the Rev. John Griffin, of Portsea, while dining with him. Captain Wilson was vain of his own powers of debate; and, proud of his imaginary victories over other combatants, eagerly entered the lists with Mr. Griffin. After dinner they retired to an alcove in the garden, to continue the discussion; and there Wilson's objections to Christianity were answered with a candour and seriousness which convinced him of the sincerity of his opponent.

From this time there was unmistakable evidence of the earnest and anxious direction of Captain Wilson's thoughts towards religious subjects. He became a constant student of the Scriptures, and requested from his neighbour the renewed loan of a Christian book which he

Digitized by Google

had previously returned unread. Still, though interested and aroused, he was not spiritually converted: as yet there was no true conviction of personal guilt; no conscious need of the mediation, sacrifice, and righteousness of the Divine Redeemer."

The next Lord's day Captain Wilson, no longer an infidel, although not yet a Christian, resolved to hear the minister in whose conversation he had been so much interested. On his return home he said to his niece, "If what I have heard to-day be true, I am a lost man." The week which followed was a busy and painful one in the now awakened sinner's conscience. The next Sabbath found him again listening to the words of life from Mr. Griffin's lips; and it was soon apparent that old things were passing away, and all things were becoming new. The truth which came with most light and power to his heart was God's method of justifying the ungodly by faith in Jesus. This truth once received, he had peace with God. "The horrors of the night were turned into the joys of the morning." He was now in deed and in truth "God's man."

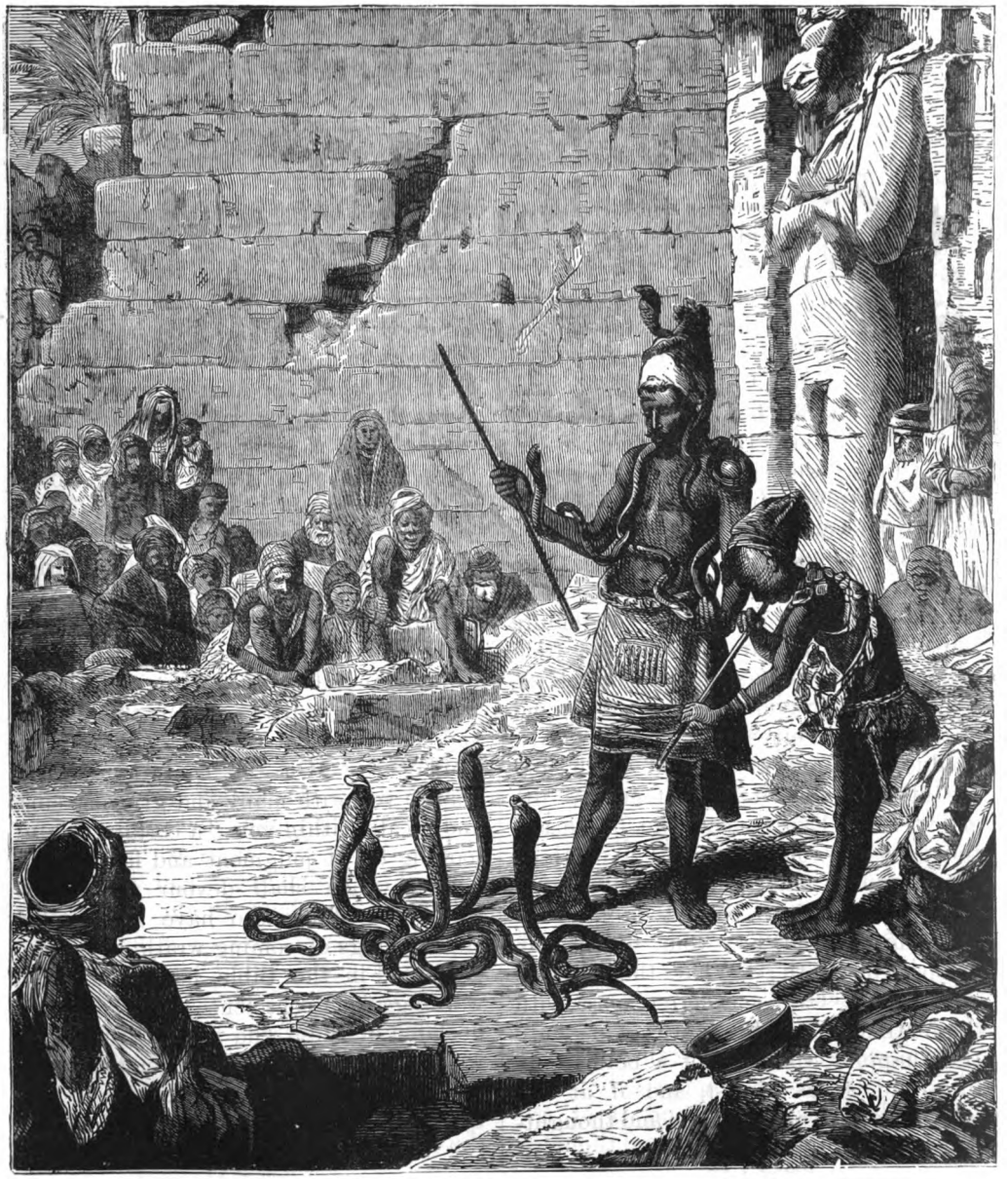
For two years from this period Captain Wilson walked in new and marvellous light. He was like one who had awakened from a long and troubled dream; and he felt deeply that it was to God's grace alone he owed the change. Left to himself, suffering and hardship had rendered his spirit more obdurate. Now found by Him whom he had not sought, his whole desire was to prove his sense of obligation to his Divine Saviour.

He saw in a Christian periodical an account of a proposal to establish missions in the islands of the Pacific Ocean. He had been asking himself whether he could forsake all for Christ's sake and the gospel's. And now came the practical test. "If you are wanted to command the expedition," he said to himself, "have you faith to sacrifice all the comforts around you; and, freely devoting yourself to the service, could you embark once more on the deep, not to increase your substance, but to seek the souls redeemed by the blood of the Lamb?" The reply was prompt and decisive. And in the end of 1796 Captain Wilson left England as commander of the "Duff," to convey thirty missionaries to preach the good news of God's mercy to the barbarous tribes of Polynesia. He was "wrapped up in his awful charge." "I am persuaded God has called me to this work," he said, "and that He will carry me through it. I know in my own strength I can do nothing right; but, as the apostle says, 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.'" This missionary service was successful, and Captain Wilson adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour till the end of his days.

What a glorious thing is conversion! The richest, the wisest, the most virtuous, while unregenerate, are far from God. The poorest, the most ignorant, the most vicious, enlightened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, become the children of God.

Digitized by Google

Hope or Fear in Death.



EASTERN SNAKE-CHARMERS.

Digitized by Google

Hope or Fear in Death.



Voltaire, the French philosopher and unbeliever, said, when dying, "I hate life, and am afraid of death." The apostle Paul, the servant of Jesus Christ, said to his friends, in view of death, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."[1]

What a remarkable difference is here presented in the views and feelings of two men! It is a difference of infinite importance; nor are the causes from which it arises of less moment. Unbelief, rejecting the Saviour of the world, and faith, which receives Him into the heart, produce, the one a dread of death, and the other a blessed hope of eternal life and peace. Every man who has heard the gospel is on one or other of these two grounds; and hence no question of deeper interest can be put to any one than this—What are your feelings in prospect of death? What, then, reader, are yours? Can you agree most with the sentiment of Voltaire or that of Paul? If, unhappily, you are not a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and if at the same time you have a clear and thoughtful spirit, you will feel obliged to say with the former, "*I am afraid of death.*"

[1] Phil. i. 23.

The unbeliever is not without a consciousness that he has reason to fear death. Every man has a feeling of self-approval when he does what he knows to be right, and of self-condemnation when he does what he knows to be wrong. What does this inward voice say to you with regard to your state before God? Does it tell you, that you have loved God with all your heart, and your fellow-creatures as yourself; that you have always been humble amidst temptation to pride, and patient under temptation to irritability; that you have not slighted the Saviour; but have at all times believed in and trusted Him, and been "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," and therefore that you have no reason to fear death? On the contrary, does it charge you with many and grievous sins, and create within you "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries?"[1] Many who have never read the warnings of coming wrath which are contained in the Bible have had those warnings from conscience alone; as it is declared of those who are without God's written law, "These, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their

[1] Heb. x. 27

Digitized by Google

hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another."[1]

The word of God gives the unbeliever reason to fear death, for it confirms the report which the consciousness that he is accountable to God makes of future judgment; and that word states with terrible distinctness all the unbeliever's grounds for alarm.

"A young man," says a missionary in one of the Sandwich Islands, "whom I had never known as interested in religion, called upon me, as he said, to inquire. Having seated himself by my side, he asked me, with an agitated frame, and a look I shall never forget, 'What means this? For weeks past I have had a load upon me which troubles me much. By day and night it follows me, so that I am unable to sleep or rest. I have tried to get rid of it; I have prayed to God to take it away, but it continues in my heart.' Then pulling the Gospel of Luke out of his pocket, he pointed to this passage: 'The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'[2] He then said, 'There is my load. Oh, my soul! to that unquenchable fire I fear it must go.' His whole frame now trembled with excitement, and his voice became inarticulate."

Perhaps, reader, in your own experience, when you have heard the solemn warnings of God's word to sinners, conscience has told that they applied to yourself, and you have felt "a load" upon your heart night and day; you may have tried to forget it by plunging into business or pleasure; your companions may have thought you happy, but the appearance of mirth concealed the reality of misery.

There is solid reason for all the sinner's fear of death, for "it is appointed unto men once to die, but *after this the judgment.*"[1] Unbeliever, you may die to-night, and after the first death, will be the "second death." This will be not the extinction of consciousness, but the death of happiness, the death of hope; for we read of the wicked that they shall "perish;" that their "worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;"[2] that they shall depart for ever from the presence of God; that they shall "go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."[3] These are not the dreams of superstition nor the fictions of priestcraft, as some will declare, but the true sayings of God. Have you not, therefore, reason to fear death?

The fear of death, however, *may be destroyed.* God only warns us of the wrath to come, that we may flee from it; He awakens our fear, that we may under its influence go to the Saviour. There *is* a Saviour, and He has said, "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."[4] He took our nature, that He might suffer in our place the penalty due to our sin, and that "through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and

[1] Rom. ii. 14, 15. [2] Luke xvi. 22-24.
[1] Heb. ix. 27. [2] Mark ix. 44.
[3] Matt. xxv. 46. [4] John xi. 25.

Digitized by Google

deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."[1] You have now only to accept the death of Jesus, and make it your plea for pardon; you have only, with true faith and trust, to pray, "Lord, let His sufferings be accepted instead of my sufferings, and His righteousness be my title to eternal life," and so waiting on God you will find the sting of death taken away.

When the serpent-charmers of India go about from place to place showing their skill, they carry with them serpents of a deadly kind, which are trained to coil round them, and to bite angrily at their naked limbs; but as their fangs have been previously pulled out, they can do no hurt. A native teacher, who was preaching one day at Dinapore, drew from this custom a striking illustration of the Saviour's power over death. The preacher knew that his idolatrous countrymen generally regarded death with slavish fear. He therefore said, "There is a dreadful serpent called Death. You shudder at the very mention of its name. No man can charm it; no man can flee from it; no man can take away its sting. But what no man could ever do, Christ has done by His atoning death and perfect righteousness. Those who believe in Jesus are now no more afraid of this formidable serpent; for, its fangs being gone, it is harmless. Christians, you can even smile upon it now, fondle it to your bosom, and sing, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of the sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."[1] And as the speaker uttered these words, the native Christians were seen shaking each other's hands, and exchanging looks of delight, to think that Christ had delivered them from "the fear of death."

Reader, it is probable that you have tried to subdue the fear of death, but that you have hitherto tried in the wrong way. Resolve from this time to seek the true and only remedy against this fear, a living faith in Jesus Christ. Never listen to those who aim to dispel your fear by the assurance that the "serpent is harmless, and that whatever your character may be, death will have no sting for you, because God is too merciful to punish the wicked beyond the grave. You know that God will execute judgment; the word of God says that He will; the death of the Saviour declares that He will; for if the Lord of glory died that those who believe on Him may be saved, it is plain that those who believe not must be lost.[2]

Never try to get rid of your fear by the persuasion that this "serpent" only strikes the aged, the sickly, or those who are evidently exposed to danger; for daily observation shows that death may meet us at any time, and in any place. Seek, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to be freed from your fear by "seeking the Lord while He may be found." Commit your soul to Jesus, the conqueror of death, and you will live for ever.

[1] Heb. ii. 14 15.

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 55–57. [2] John iii. 16.

Digitized by Google

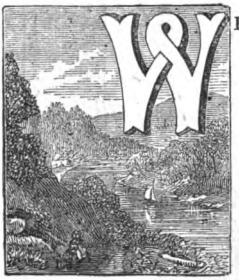
RICHES.



"WE SHALL BE SATISFIED WITH THE GOODNESS OF THY HOUSE."

Digitized by Google

RICHES.



WHAT is so generally coveted as riches? Wealth is supposed to be the sure means of happiness, and is regarded by many, if not by most, as the highest object of human ambition. The possessors of riches dote with fond affection on them, and they who have not obtained wealth covet few things so much. Some years ago, a miser in the neighbourhood of Coventry, during his last illness, had a bag of gold brought to him daily, and he died, grasping the bag with a hold so firm, that after his death it was difficult to force it from his lifeless hand. To obtain money, which this man so much prized, multitudes sacrifice ease, health, life, and heaven.

Such love of riches is a wretched infatuation; for "we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." But there are riches worthy of all sacrifices. These, however, are not the riches of this world: they belong to a better.

Perhaps, reader, you have toiled for riches, and been successful; yet you are not happy: your soul needs better treasures than those which death takes away. Perhaps you have toiled, but have not succeeded; turn your thoughts to other riches, far better than those of earth, and sure to be obtained by every one that prayerfully seeks them of the Lord Jesus, who says, "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich."[1]

In His glorious gospel the gracious Saviour offers these true riches to dying men. They consist not of one blessing only, but of many blessings. In them are included, the pardon of all sins, justification and acceptance in the Beloved, peace with God, adoption into His family, the comforting and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, an interest in many exceeding great and precious promises, and a title to eternal life. These riches also include the possession of the best and dearest friendship. To the happy soul that possesses these treasures, the great, the everlasting God becomes a loving Father, Jesus a Saviour and a guardian, and the Holy Spirit a constant helper. They who are thus enriched are dear to the eternal God: He dwells with them, loves them, and delights in making them happy.[2] They are beloved by Christ with an everlasting love.[3]

The world sees not the worth of these

[1] Rev. iii. 18.
[2] Isaiah lvii. 15; John xvi. 27; Luke xii. 32.
[3] Rom. viii. 35

Digitized by Google

"durable riches;" but the Christian, who is taught of God, knows that all earthly wealth is poverty in comparison with them. An old writer mentions that in the place where he was born, there lived a lover of the world, exceedingly rich, who kept many of his treasures in his house: once a day he took all his bags of silver and gold out of his trunk and laid them in several heaps on a large table; then he would go to the other end of the room, and gaze on his treasures, and after a while would run to the table, with outstretched arms, gather all his bags into one heap, and cry out, as if overcome with joy, "All is mine—all is mine!" But poor indeed were his treasures if compared with those of the poorest believer.

It is related that a gentleman of large property on one occasion pointed out to a friend the size of his estate. It extended so far in one direction, and so far in another. His friend inquired if he saw a cottage in a neighbouring village? and then told him there dwelt a poor woman who could say far more than all he had said. "Why, what can she say?" "She can say, Christ is mine." Happy they who have this heavenly wealth!

Riches are loved because it is supposed that they minister to the happiness of their owners. But worldly riches inspire no such peace and joy as flow from gospel hope, the love of Christ shed abroad in the heart, His peace, which passeth understanding, and the blessed prospect of heaven. Even in poverty these yield real comfort. A lady of wealth and piety, who had suffered heavy afflictions, related her sorrows to a poor woman whose cottage she had entered. The poor Christian, taking her to a closet, said, "Do you see anything?" "No." She took her to another and repeated the question; with some surprise the lady again said, "No." "Then, madam," said she, "in this room you see all I have in this world; but why should I be unhappy? I have Christ in my heart, and heaven before me. I have the unfailing word of promise that bread shall be given and water shall be sure, while I stay a little longer in this vale of tears; and when I die, glory awaits me through the merits of my Redeemer." Blessed confidence! Reader, are these hopes yours?

Worldly wealth is delusive. The expectations it excites are not realised; its possessors grasp it, expecting happiness, but are still unsatisfied; an aching void remains that it cannot fill. A gentleman of large property, once beholding a little chimney-sweeper going singing along the street, declared he would part with all his wealth to be as happy as the little cheerful sweeper—so far were great riches from making him happy. But in all affliction spiritual treasures are solid wealth. A pious man, who had once been wealthy, but who had become so poor that he had sought refuge in an American almshouse, said to a visitor, "You see, sir, I am poor; but I have seen better days. I am sixty-five years of age. I once had a large property, but it is gone. I had children too, but they are all dead; a wife (his tears flowed), but six months ago she departed to her eternal rest, and on the eve of her departure sang—

'Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are.'

Digitized by Google

Ah, sir, there is no delusion here. Many would persuade me that faith in Christ is a delusion; but it is not so. Property is a delusion; I had it, but it has vanished. My children have vanished; my dear wife is gone; but faith in Jesus—that remains."

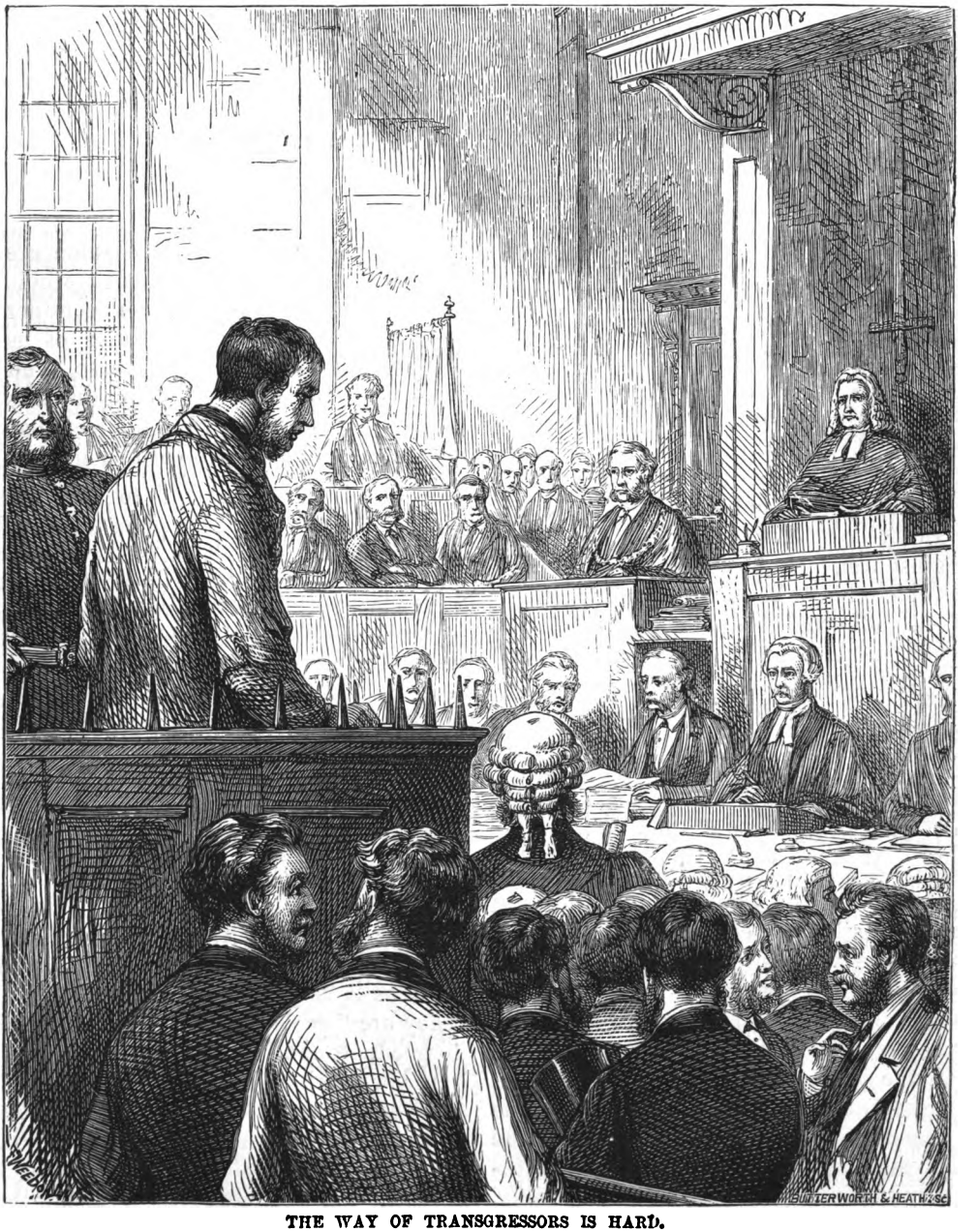
These true riches excel all worldly wealth because they give support and peace even in circumstances that would else be full of misery. Behold a rich man tossing on the bed of pain, tormented with the burnings of fever or some painful disease; how little comfort his riches now yield! Now look upon a poor man in like suffering, but cheered by heavenly hopes, and in looking on him behold not a scene the offspring of fancy, but a reality thus described by one that beheld it:—"On entering the cottage I found him alone. I was startled by the sight of a pale, emaciated man, a living image of death, fastened upright in his chair by a rude contrivance of cords and belts hanging from the ceiling. He was totally unable to move either hand or foot, having more than four years been entirely deprived of the use of his limbs, yet the whole time suffering extreme anguish from swellings at all his joints. I asked, 'Are you left alone, my friend, in this deplorable situation?' 'No, sir, I am not alone, for God is with me.' His Bible lay open before him; I asked him if he ever felt tempted to repine under the pressure of so long-continued and heavy a calamity? 'Not,' said he, 'for the last *three* years; blessed be God for it!'—his faith giving life to his countenance as he spoke—'for I have learned from this book in whom to believe; and though I am aware of my weakness and unworthiness, I am persuaded that God will not leave me nor forsake me. And so it is that often when my lips are closed with pain, and I cannot speak to the glory of God, *He enables me to sing His praises in my heart.*'"

Rich and poor, old and young, alike need the true riches which are hid in Christ; and both should attend the house of God to make their common requests known to the Father of all, and be made heirs of the kingdom. Not transient are the Christian's riches. Blessings obtained by faith, union with God and the Saviour, last for ever. When life closes, these still enrich. When the judgment day has passed, these bless for ever: tens of thousands of years after the worldly have lost their wealth, the humble believer will rejoice in his, and while eternal ages roll will continue rich and happy.

Reader, are you a possessor of these treasures? There is but one way to obtain them: Jesus said, "I am the way." They can be found only by coming to Him, and experiencing the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Seek them while you may. All may be yours. The blood of Jesus can cleanse you from all sin. Believe in Him. Yield to His invitation—"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

Digitized by Google

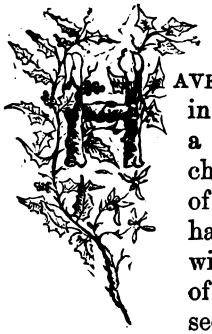
The Law and the Gospel.



THE WAY OF TRANSGRESSORS IS HARD.

Digitized by Google

The Law and the Gospel.



Have you ever been present in a court of justice, when a prisoner has been charged with a breach of the laws? If so, you have perhaps watched with interest the progress of the trial. You have seen the prisoner, in the presence of his judge, called to plead "Guilty" or "Not Guilty" to the charge against him. He has there stood to clear his character, or be convicted of his crime. If he admitted his offence, or if, on evidence, his guilt was proved, he received the sentence awarded by the law he had violated. Perhaps in that prisoner's case you felt deep concern; and as the evidence slowly but clearly brought out the fact that he was a guilty man, your compassion was moved towards him. At the same time, when the sentence which banished him for life was pronounced, you admitted its justice, and the necessity and equity of the law under which he was condemned. You felt that without such laws there would be only strife, confusion, and misery; and that the severity of the penalty was required for the good order, peace, and safety of society at large. Now, there are some persons who are ready to admit the necessity and value of good laws, faithfully administered, in a *nation* or a *family*, who strangely forget that the same are necessary for the government of the whole family of man. They do not consider that God is the Father and Ruler of us all; and that it is right, wise, and benevolent in Him to maintain His authority. They disregard the fact that none of His intelligent creatures are left to act independently of Him. In heaven the angels are obedient to His will. When man was created, a plain command was given to him to be kept, as a proof of his obedience to God: this was a law to Adam, simple in its kind, but suited to his nature and condition at that time In every age of the world since then, man has been under Divine laws; and it becomes all of us to inquire how we stand towards them,—whether we have kept or broken them. To this end, we should consider that all God's commandments are "holy," pure, excellent, and opposed to all sin; they enjoin what is morally right, and prohibit what is morally wrong. They are "just," or such as He has a right to require, and such as it is proper should be obeyed. They are "good," or beneficial, and lead to goodness and happiness.

A law which requires obedience consists of a *command* and a *penalty*. When a king or a parliament enacts any law, there is what is called the "penal clause;" it declares the punishment

Digitized by Google

that shall be inflicted on those who break the command. Without this clause, the law would be little better than advice, or entreaty, or vain threatening; it would be of no effect in securing obedience. It seems quite necessary, then, when God gives laws to man, that He should also declare what will be the consequence of disobedience. And so we find it. When He says, "Do this," we have the command. And when He says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" this is the penalty: and it is a fearful, though a just one, for it includes the death of the body and loss of the soul.

It is of great importance to inquire what kind of obedience the law of God demands. Notice, then, that it claims *universal* obedience; ALL the commandments must be kept: If a man keep the whole law, and offend in one point, he is guilty of all.[1] It must be *perfect*. There must be no defect or flaw; it requires supreme love to God, unqualified and unfeigned submission to His will in all things, and the love of our neighbours as ourselves. It must be *perpetual*, unbroken from the earliest period of life to its close: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."[2] It must be *spiritual*. When the law forbids a sin, it equally forbids every thought and feeling towards it. When it commands a duty, it enjoins every habit and desire that would lead to its proper discharge. All rash anger it regards as heart-murder; all indulgence of impure thoughts is a breach of the seventh commandment.[3] It must be *personal*. It admits of no proxy. It is an awful delusion to suppose that any mere creature has an excess or surplus of merit which can be placed to the account of another person, or that he can obey on behalf of another. And then, the law cannot accept of any compromise of partial obedience. It takes no account of promises of amendment; nor does it make known any provision for pardon. It is not in its nature to do anything of this kind; if it did so, it would undermine its own authority, and lead men to have slight views of duty and of sin.

Look now at this standard of holiness, and say if you can plead "Not guilty," and are ready to abide your trial at the bar of God? Does not your own heart condemn you? Are you not conscious of almost innumerable sins, in thought, word, and deed? Have you not done the things you ought not to have done, and left undone the things you ought to have done? Are you not oppressed with a sense of the greatness of your guilt? And under such feelings, will you not present the earnest cry, that God would not enter into judgment with you, seeing that in His sight shall no man living be justified.[1]

When a criminal is about to receive the extreme sentence of the law, it will not avail him to say, "I have kept some of the laws of my country;" the answer would be, "You should have kept them *all*:" or, "I have kept them during the greater part of my life;" to which the judge would reply, "You should have *continued* in your obedience;" or, "I repent of my offence, and promise for the time to come not to repeat it:" to which would probably be said, "I cannot regard your plea or your promise: you are

[1] James ii. 10. [2] Gal. iii. 10. [3] Matt. v. 21–28.

[1] Psa. cxliii. 2.

Digitized by Google

convicted by the laws of your country, and it only remains for me to pronounce your sentence. Your prayer for mercy must be presented at the throne of your sovereign, who alone can save you from the doom you have brought upon yourself."

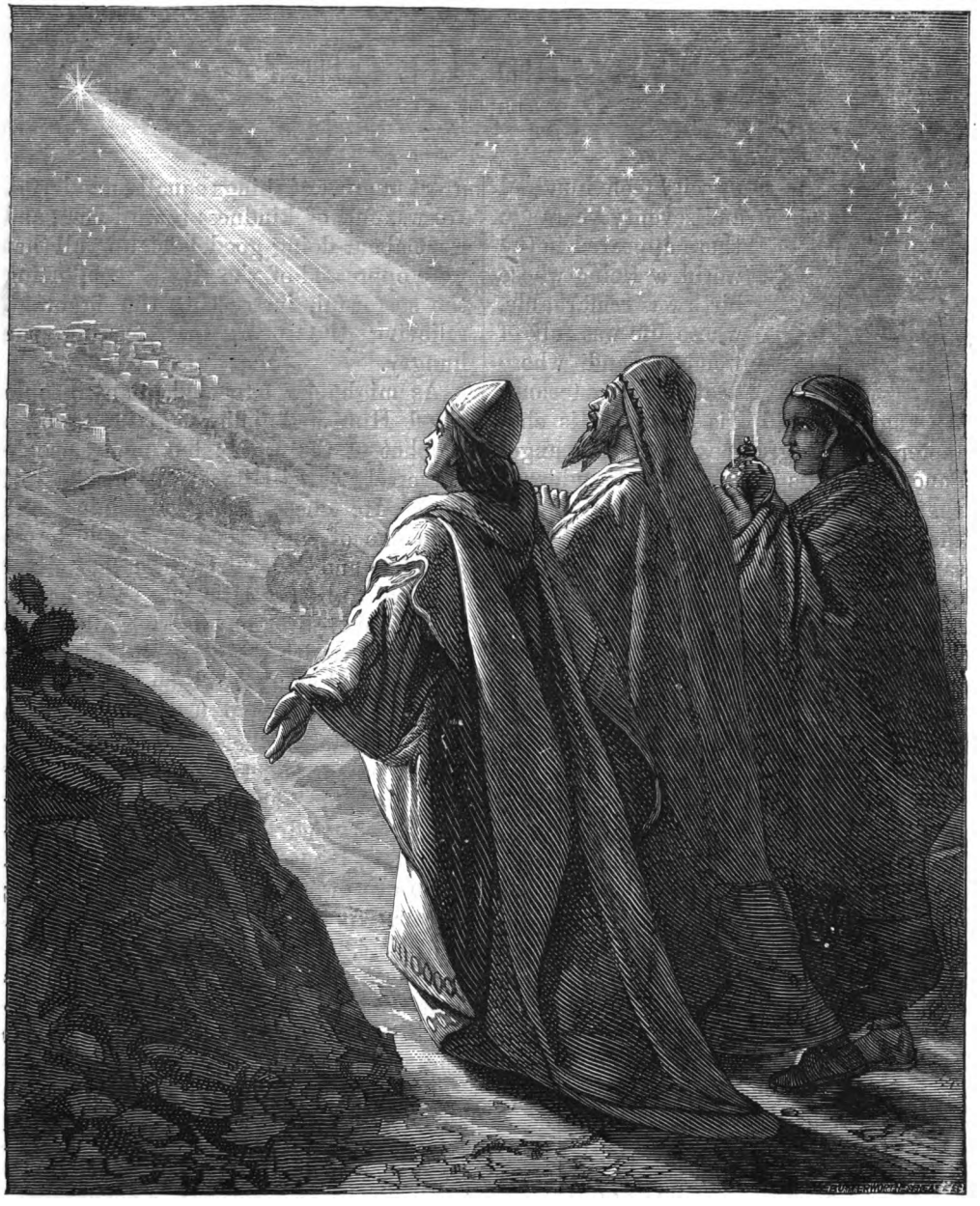
But, reader, there is an important and encouraging difference between this supposed case and your own. The same Holy Scriptures which make known to you the LAW, contain also the GOSPEL. They teach you that He who is your Lawgiver and Judge is slow to anger, and ready to forgive; that He can be merciful, and still be just and holy. While they declare your lost and ruined condition as an offender, they direct you to a Redeemer, "mighty to save." To you, a prisoner under the curse of the law, they proclaim a way of escape which free grace has opened to you. They make known to the condemned that Christ has fulfilled the *command* of the law, and that all its claims have been met by His perfect righteousness. A complete obedience was required in every particular, and they tell you that Christ fulfilled all righteousness; that He kept the whole law, and did not offend in one point; and that He freely did so for mankind, that through His merits the sinner believing in Him might be justified, or approved before God. And while He thus perfectly fulfilled its precepts, He also paid the *penalty* for sinners, by His sufferings and death: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."[1] His Divine nature gave dignity and worth to His obedience and sufferings, and made them of more value and more honourable than the personal obedience of the whole human race could have done. All that the law demanded thus has been met; and God has declared that He can now be just while He justifies the ungodly. A release is obtained from condemnation and punishment; and a title is bestowed for an eternal life of happiness. If you ask, Who are they to whom these privileges belong? it may be answered, They are those who believe in Jesus; who go to Him in faith, who yield their heart to Him, and show their love and gratitude by living in His service. Surely, this is gospel—"good news"—"glad tidings" of great joy to all people!

But it may be, you are ready to declare, "I am not likely to deceive myself in such a manner. My sins are too open and public for me to deny them, and too great and vile for me to defend. 'Mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.'[2] I have no obedience to plead. My life has been a continued course of rebellion. I deserve to be utterly condemned. Yet is there no hope for me?" Yes, there is hope for the most guilty. The Lord Jesus Christ is able to save to the uttermost. His merits are more than your transgressions; and if you make Him your trust, He will save you from the curse of the law, and at last present you faultless before the presence of your God.

[1] Gal. iii. 13. [2] Psa. xxxviii. 4.

Digitized by Google

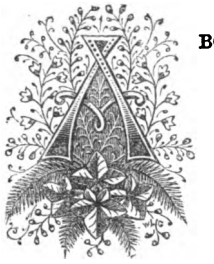
Why did He Die?



WHEN THEY SAW THE STAR THEY REJOICED WITH EXCEEDING GREAT JOY.

Digitized by Google

Why did He Die?



About eighteen hundred and seventy years ago there appeared in the world a Being whose birth was remarkable, whose life was full of wonders, and whose death was mysterious. An angel foretold His coming, His character, and His greatness. Another angel announced His birth: "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men." A star directed wise men from the east to the place where He was born. The rumour of the child's birth entered the palace of Herod, and troubled him. By Divine appointment the child was called Jesus; and the reason for giving this name was, "He shall *save* His people from their sins." When only twelve years old He discoursed with learned men, "and all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers."

When He was about "thirty years of age" He became a public teacher, travelling through the countries of Judea and Galilee, and instructing vast numbers who resorted to Him. He called the dead to life, and made the sick whole in an instant. He cured blindness and deafness, yea, all sorts of diseases, with a word or a look; cleansed the lepers, and did a great number of things equally wonderful. He was full of kindness toward men, and went about doing good, "healing all that were oppressed of the devil," comforting the sorrowful, instructing the ignorant, relieving the poor, and feeding the hungry.

As might be expected, many people loved Him, and believed Him to be a prophet of the Lord; but many people perversely hated Him, and wished to kill Him. He chose twelve disciples, and even one of them went to His bitterest enemies, and for thirty pieces of silver engaged to betray Him into their hands. While this traitor was making all things ready, Jesus with the other disciples sang an evening hymn; He then walked with them in pleasant and heavenly converse to a mountain, where He offered up a solemn prayer, affectionately commending them to God;[1] and then, passing over the brook Cedron into a garden, He withdrew Himself from them about a stone's throw, and kneeled down in solitary prayer. As He prayed He was in agony, and His agony being intense, He prayed the more earnestly, while His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. God heard His prayer, and sent an angel to strengthen Him.

Presently came Judas the traitor with an armed band, who bound Him and led Him away to the high-priest. Then they

[1] John xvii.

Digitized by Google

brought Jesus from the high-priest to the hall of judgment, and accused Him of many things before Pilate, the Roman governor of the land. They could establish no charge against Him. Pilate said, "I find in Him no fault at all." Nevertheless they treated Him cruelly and shamefully; and to allay the turbulence of the people, who clamorously demanded His death, Pilate, after washing his hands, as a vain token that he did not share in the crime, delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they led Him away to a place called Golgotha, where they nailed Him to a cross, and crucified Him between two thieves. On that cross He hung for about six hours in bodily torture and mental anguish. There was darkness over the whole earth from the sixth hour till the ninth, that is, in our time, from twelve o'clock till three in the afternoon. "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost. Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned."[1] In this shameful and awful death is a great mystery, but it is explained by one short sentence in the prophecy of Isaiah liii. 5, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." Jesus Christ was crucified and slain for the sins of men. How glorious, affecting, and consolatory is this truth!

How *glorious!* The Lord Jesus Christ puts Himself in the place of sinners, and bears the punishment which they deserved by their sins. Had it been an angel who had done this, or one man who had done it for another, we should have admired such disinterested conduct. But it would have fallen infinitely below the glory of the Saviour's substitution. What forbearance does He manifest! Christ is the Son of God as well as the Son of man. In His Divine nature He is equal with God; essentially one with God. But sinners live in hatred of God's law, in disregard of His character, in neglect, sometimes even in contempt, of His authority. What longsuffering, then, it was in the Divine Word, Himself the Creator and Governor of all, to spare them, and not rather destroy them for their sins. Having broken the law, they were condemned by the law; "For it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

It is also deeply *affecting.* Here is the innocent undergoing severe, public, and prolonged suffering. If we look at this suffering even in the ancient type, it should deeply affect us. The patriarch brings a lamb from the flock, binds it for sacrifice, lays it upon the altar, takes his knife, and slays it. There is the animal struggling, gasping, and dying. Who can look upon that blood and those expiring agonies without being moved? Why should it suffer and die? But let us turn to the anguish and death of our Lord. He did no evil. He wronged no one. He spoke nothing amiss. Never had He an evil thought or a wicked desire. "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him: He hath put Him to grief." Never was any sorrow like unto His sorrow. What

[1] Luke xxiii. 46–48.

Digitized by Google

inward torment was that which wrung a bloody sweat from His body in the garden, and which agonised His spirit upon the cross? It is affecting to think that one thus perfectly innocent should be put to such suffering; and equally so that one "altogether lovely" should be put to such shame. The death of the cross was the death usually inflicted on the greatest criminals. A mover of sedition, a perpetrator of horrible and base crimes, a very pest to society, could not be put to a viler death. How affecting, then, to think of the mild, compassionate, kind, benevolent, and peaceful Jesus bound by cruel soldiers, arrayed in the garments of mockery, buffeted, spit upon, scourged, nailed to a cross, and lifted up to be a mark for insult, to suffer dreadfully in His body and soul, and to die under every token of being an execrated being. Who can revolve this fact in his mind without being deeply affected by it, especially when he remembers that the pardon of *his* sin required the humiliation and the woe? In the cross of Christ we see it proved beyond doubt, that without shedding of blood there is no remission, and that it required a sacrifice of infinite value for the pardon of sin. In what a humbling light then does it place every child of Adam. My soul, *thou* hast sinned. None can atone for thy offences but the Son of God. Nothing can expiate thy crimes but the agonies, the shame, and the death of Jesus. Alas, then, where must I have been but for the tender compassion of Christ? Were the wrath which came upon Him to fall on me, it would sink me to the lowest hell. But what mercy! "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed."

What *consoling* truths are these! Who henceforth need despair? What though my sins be many and great; what though I justly deserve the punishment of hell; here is an illustrious Substitute, a precious Sacrifice. Paul reckoned himself the chief of sinners, and under a deep sense of his vileness exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" but in triumph he added, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Why, then, why should any one hesitate to trust his soul with Jesus for salvation? He who so loved poor sinners as to die the death of the cross for them deserves all confidence and affection; and for the encouragement of all who trust Him, He hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." This is why He died.

After these glorious tidings have reached the ears, and by the grace of the Holy Spirit have penetrated the heart, who shall be afraid to enter eternity? With such a glorious prospect, who would not willingly enter upon the eternal state? Reader, see that *you accept* Christ for *your* Saviour with true faith. By the aid of the Holy Spirit embrace Him, love Him, serve Him; and all is safe.

Digitized by Google

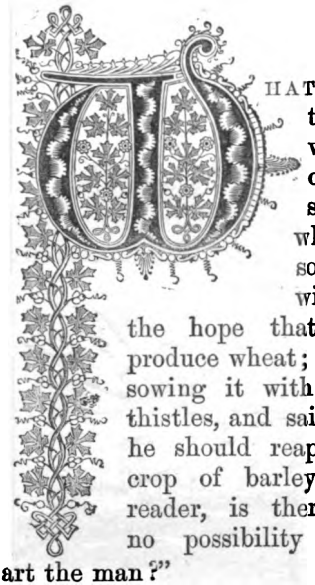
What Seed are you Sowing?



SOME SEEDS FELL BY THE WAYSIDE.

Digitized by Google

What Seed are you Sowing?



HAT would you think of the wisdom, or even of the common sense of a man whom you found sowing his field with tares, in the hope that they would produce wheat; or, if he were sowing it with the seed of thistles, and said he expected he should reap therefrom a crop of barley? And yet, reader, is there, after all, no possibility that "thou art the man?"

Why should not the seed of tares produce wheat, and that of thistles barley? You may say, experience teaches us otherwise. True, but that does not fully answer the question. The correct reply is this: God gave at the creation to every herb and every tree the power of producing seed after its kind: "Thou sowest . . . bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body."[1] So that as certainly as night succeeds day, and harvest succeeds seed-time, year after year, "WHATSOEVER A MAN SOWETH, THAT SHALL HE ALSO REAP."[2] The reason is, God has ordered it so. It might have been otherwise, for God can do all things; but so it has pleased Him, and no power of man can make any change in the arrangement.

But why say so much on so very plain a point? Because it shows the force of what follows: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. FOR HE THAT SOWETH TO HIS FLESH SHALL OF THE FLESH REAP CORRUPTION; BUT HE THAT SOWETH TO THE SPIRIT SHALL OF THE SPIRIT REAP LIFE EVERLASTING."[1] Observe, the assertion is not merely true as it regards sowing in the ground, and reaping the fruits of the earth, but it is equally true of another kind of sowing, and another kind of reaping. The connection between the seed-time and the harvest is as much ordered by God, and therefore just as certain, in the one case as it is in the other.

In some degree we may see this plainly. A man spends all his money in drinking, gaming, and sensual gratifications. Does this tend to the health, long life, prosperity, respectability, comfort, and happiness of himself and his family? Might you not just as well expect that the seed of tares would produce wheat? Another man neglects the education and training of his children,

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 37, 38. [2] Gal. vi. 7.

[1] Gal. vi. 8.

Digitized by Google

letting them go into the society of the worst companions, and practise wickedness. Do you expect to see those children grow up industrious, honest, respectable, and virtuous? Might you not just as soon hope to reap barley from thistle-seed? "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

But man possesses a soul which teaches him to look beyond this present world. The Bible instructs us to think of more than we can see—to believe that which we at present see not. Now, as there is a God, and a heaven of holiness and of happiness, does it not appear reasonable that a soul which loves God, and serves Him, and delights in Him, and enjoys communion with Him, and longs for His favour and His presence, is prepared after death to dwell with Him in the abode of happiness and of holiness for ever? This will be but going to enjoy a happiness "after his kind," for which such a man was already fitted and prepared, and the beginning of which he had already tasted on earth.

But, on the other hand, let us suppose a man to die, filled with evil feelings and pride, and envy and malice; since death can produce no moral change, that is, no change in a man's character and dispositions, how clearly it appears that all these passions in another world will necessarily constitute a condition of most intolerable wretchedness: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Or, to take another supposition. A man toils and labours night and day to acquire wealth. His motive for doing so is the future comfort of himself and his family. But let us suppose, as is often the case, that death surprises him in the midst of all his toil; or, as is always the case, that it overtakes him very soon, at most in a very few years, after he has reached the object of his ambition; it is quite evident that he cannot take away with him that kind of enjoyment in the pursuit of which he has been spending all his life. Now, if he has taken no pains, and made no provision for his welfare beyond the grave, is it reasonable to expect that he will be happy in that world to which he is called away?

This is a most serious subject. Let us look at it a little more closely. The verse already quoted begins with this warning: "BE NOT DECEIVED; GOD IS NOT MOCKED: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." There is danger, then, of deception. We may think we are sowing good seed, when in truth it may be nothing but tares; and time is passing away, and the harvest is coming on, which will decide the fact at once and for ever. It is of infinite importance to be sure of the character of our conduct, since our thoughts, feelings, words, and actions have a connection with what shall be hereafter, and according as they are spiritual and heavenly, or as they are carnal and earthly, they will issue in an eternity of happiness or misery.

Do you ask how this certainty is to be obtained? It is by comparing your state and conduct with the requirements of the Scriptures. If you are diligently and with much prayer seeking to know the will of God, as revealed by His Spirit in the Bible; if you are sincerely receiving and embracing His method of salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ, as there pointed out, if you are holding

Digitized by Google

constant communion with God as a reconciled Father, through His beloved Son, if you are, through the Spirit, daily mortifying your corrupt passions and affections, if you are seeking in everything to be led by the Spirit of God, if you are using to the glory of God the talents intrusted to you, and endeavouring, as a parent, friend, neighbour, or in any other relation of life, to apply all your influence to bring others to Christ, then you are "sowing to the Spirit;" and as certainly as every seed produces its own kind, shall you "reap life everlasting." You may be "sowing in tears;" seed-time is a laborious, not always a happy season, but you shall "reap in joy." "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him,"[1] for "to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward."[2] Saved not only yourself, but probably you will be the happy instrument of influencing others, and they many others: thus your joy shall be receiving a perpetual increase. For he that thus reapeth "receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."[3]

One thought more. "For everything there is a time, and a season for every purpose under heaven." Seed-time and harvest follow one another in a regular and ordained succession. No one would think of sowing in autumn, that he might reap in winter. No one who neglects the seed-time can ever expect to unite in the joy of harvest. Now, in this life only is our seed-time, in which to be renewed by the Holy Spirit, and be reconciled and saved by faith in Jesus Christ. Soon shall there appear in the clouds of heaven "one like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle;" and an angel shall cry with a loud voice, "Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe."[1] And what, then, can be left to the slothful servant, except the heartrending, but utterly unavailing lamentation, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved!" For then "the Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."[2]

"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." It is a truth, the importance of which eternity will unfold in a manner of which we can now form little conception, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." How unspeakably momentous, then, the inquiry, WHAT SEED ARE YOU NOW SOWING?

[1] Psa. cxxvi. 6. [2] Prov. xi. 18. [3] John iv. 36.

[1] Rev. xiv. 14, 15. [2] Matt. xiii. 41, 42.

Digitized by Google

THE HIDDEN TREASURE.



THE GOLD-SEEKER'S DISCOVERY.

Digitized by Google

The Hidden Treasure.



ANY men unhappily neglect or despise the gospel; but Jesus, "the wisdom of God," assures us that its blessings are a "treasure."

On this subject it is important that a correct opinion be formed. It is adaptation to our wants and circumstances that constitutes the value of every blessing. To those perishing from thirst, a cup of cold water would be of far higher value than mines of wealth. What, then, is man's condition, what the circumstances in which the gospel finds him, and how far does it meet them? Is he not *guilty and condemned?* Conscience bears witness to the truth that "all have sinned," and acquiesces in the sentence passed upon the guilty. But, in the gospel, we are assured that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin,"[1] that God "might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus,"[2] and that, by Jesus Christ, "all that believe are justified from all things."[3] Is not man *depraved and polluted?* The very spring and fountain of his moral being is corrupt; the "imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."[4] The Holy Spirit is offered as the Sanctifier, to convince of sin and show its evil nature, to renew the heart and implant within the desire after that which is good and holy, to prompt to the performance of duty, and supply the necessary strength. Have not man's sins *estranged him* from God? A thick cloud hangs between him and the light of God's countenance, and he feels his darkness and separation. But, blessed be God, by the blood of Christ, those who are "afar off" may be "brought nigh," and being no longer "strangers and foreigners," may become "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God,"[1] may approach Him as a loving Father, from whom they have hitherto shrunk as an offended Judge. Is not man *the subject of trouble and care?* Beneath some burden, all groan, with some sorrow; all hearts ache: "man is born unto trouble." In the gospel of Christ, God is a God of consolation. It opens sources of comfort to the mourner in all his grief, and springs of delight unknown in the desert of the world and eternal in their duration. So long as the soul shall continue to exist, the gospel makes known a God to serve, a Saviour to love, and the angelic and ransomed hosts as companions, and the mystery, wisdom, and goodness of God's ways to man, its eternal theme of wonder, and its never-ending source of praise.

If, then, the gospel be the only remedy

[1] 1 John i. 7. [2] Rom. iii. 26. [3] Acts xiii. 39. [4] Gen. vi. 5.

[1] Eph. ii. 19.

Digitized by Google

that meets man's condition—if it meets it fully—if its beneficial effects are as lasting as the necessity of his case requires—is it not a "treasure above all price?" Yet what multitudes neglect, despise, and reject it as a thing of no value! How is this to be accounted for? The Scriptures point to the only true explanation. It is to be found in the debased condition of man's moral nature. There are two principal causes of defect in sight, disease or injury of the eye, and the false and imperfect medium through which we view an object. Unhappily similar causes are at work in concealing from man the value of the gospel. *Man's spiritual sight is impaired.* He perceives not the desperate state of his own nature and condition, he feels not his spiritual wants and necessities, and has no sense of the awful realities of eternity. The language of the heart of man is, "I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing." The might of his own arm, and the strength of his own mind, are his reliance. He has no right perception of the real nature of God's requirements, and of the spirituality of His law. To be the honest, respectable citizen, and the decent, blameless moralist, is the utmost of his effort in a right path. While in words he will acknowledge himself a sinner, he feels nothing of his guilt and danger. *Men also view religion through a wrong medium,* and thus they see not its value. Men look at its bearing upon their pleasure and fancy. Pleasures which are sinful must be wholly resigned. But happiness is relative; it depends upon the tastes of the mind and heart; and if these be changed, for which the gospel provides, praise, once a burden, becomes a source of the greatest delight; prayer becomes the joyful expression of the heart's gratitude, and obedience to the will of God the end and aim of existence.

"But religion may affect my worldly interests." Ah! men are sharp-sighted here! But are they not short-sighted also? for did you ever know any one really suffer in following out the dictates of conscience and truth? Or is not the apostolic experience the *rule*—that if possessions, houses, lands be all resigned, still "godliness with contentment is great gain."[1] From these circumstances, then, the value of religion is concealed from men—it is "treasure hid in a field."

Reader, are you anxious to discover this treasure, to know its value, and enjoy its untold blessings? It has been seen, prized, and enjoyed by many. Search for it in God's word. There Christ is set forth as "altogether lovely." There, in the experience of the saints—in their cheerful endurance of trial—you will witness its fruits. "Search the Scriptures."[2] "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read."[3] Have you no time? Oh, think again how much you now waste! How ill-improved all will be if the whole world be gained, and the soul lost! Look for this hidden treasure also in the faithful preaching of the gospel. This is God's appointed "witness." "Faith cometh by hearing." "Take heed what ye hear, and how ye hear." Compare the doctrines declared with those of the Scriptures. Look patiently, diligently, and closely. The mists will clear away, and in God's light you shall at length see light. But it is necessary

[1] 1 Tim. vi. 6. [2] John v. 39.
[3] Isa. xxxiv. 16.

Digitized by Google

to our successful search that we look in a right spirit, as well as in a right place. Haste and carelessness are frequent causes of disappointment. To this search approach under a deep sense of your own darkness and weakness, and of the necessity of Divine teaching and influence for understanding and cordially receiving the truth. As the light of God's Spirit is promised, be anxious and earnest in prayer for this gift. As the light of God's truth is given, cheerfully accept its guidance, and do not, as the young man did in the days of Christ, find fault with any of His directions. All the promises of God—a God of eternal truth—form a sure foundation for hope. No longer, then, reader, rest on that which will prove to be only a refuge of lies. As a despiser of the value of the gospel, you are guilty, and as such condemned. The means of salvation are within your reach; embrace them, and you also shall find the gospel a "treasure." Oh! seek this treasure in faith, with earnestness, and without delay.

To gain this treasure, resign every other. It is worth every sacrifice. You can give up nothing that, in comparison, is worth keeping. You are required to resign nothing but what is evil; therefore, nothing but what it is an advantage to surrender. Let the spirit of Moses be yours—"choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." With Matthew, if Christ commands, leave "all and follow Him." With Paul, "confer not with flesh and blood." The approbation of Heaven will amply compensate the frowns and sneers of a mistaken world. To be despised by earthly friends will be a light evil, cheerfully borne, if you obtain admission among the "kindred in Christ." Temporal loss is light in the balance with eternal gain.

But do you see something of its value, and in some degree desire the possession of this "treasure," yet doubt if it can ever be yours? Why, it was for such as you the blessings of the gospel were provided—to you they are offered: but they must be *accepted* by you. If you wait till they are *forced* upon you, you wait *for ever*. Whosoever is willing, let him take this treasure freely.

If however, reader, you are altogether careless about the matter—if you see no value in religion now, and are indifferent as to whether you ever shall—take this solemn warning, given in affectionate concern for your best interests:—*The value of the gospel will not be always hid from you.* You remember the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man had his "good things" in this life, and died careless of aught beyond it; "and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments." How bitterly does he lament the past: how changed were his views then! His brethren are living as he did: how earnestly he pleads that some one might be sent to them, "that they come not into that place of torment!" Shall the realities of eternity alone open your eyes? Shall the value of the soul's salvation be only revealed to you by its everlasting loss?

Digitized by Google

THE EASTERN SHEPHERD.



HE CALLETH HIS OWN SHEEP BY NAME, AND THEY FOLLOW HIM.

Digitized by Google

The Eastern Shepherd.



THERE are few words more encouraging to those who are conscious that they have "erred and strayed like lost sheep," than the words of our Lord in the tenth chapter of the Gospel by St. John. And they are words which receive illustration from sights and scenes that are often witnessed even to this day by travellers in Eastern lands. "I am the Good Shepherd," said Christ. "The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." Again, the Good Shepherd "goeth before" His sheep, "and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice." These are the two great central points of our Lord's parable or allegory, and we find each of them illustrated by the facts and customs of shepherd life in Palestine.

Unlike the hireling, "whose own the sheep are not," and who, when he seeth the wolf or the robber coming, thinks only of himself and fleeth, leaving the sheep to be devoured or stolen, the Good Shepherd hazards His own life in defence of His flock, and even "lays it down" to save them. Such in substance are the words of Christ. "And this," says the author of "The Land and the Book," "is not the fanciful costume of a parable; it is simple fact. Many adventures with wild beasts occur in those parts, not unlike that recounted by David. And when the thief and the robber come—and come they do—the faithful shepherd has often put his life in his hand to defend his flock. I have known more than one case in which he had literally to lay it down in the contest."

Well may we admire such heroism and devotion. But the truth concerning Christ is, after all, but very imperfectly illustrated by such facts as these. Christ did not lose His life in desperately defending His flock. "No man taketh it from Me," He said: "but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." While it is true that He was put to death by wicked men, it is equally true that He gave Himself voluntarily to be a sacrifice for the sins of the guilty. The world was perishing, the whole race had gone astray from God, and it was not a mere exercise of power that could bring them back to His fold and family. All entrance was closed against them by the justice which demanded that they should die. And the "commandment," or commission, which Jesus received from the Father was that He should lay down His life for those who were not merely exposed to danger like sheep that had strayed, but who were guilty in that they had

Digitized by Google

strayed, and whose guilt as well as helplessness stood in the way of their restoration to God. It was part of His "commission," likewise, that He should "take His life again;" that He should rise from the dead, and be exalted to be the living Saviour and Shepherd of His flock. All this, as a faithful and Good Shepherd, Christ has done.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."[1] "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."[2] "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."[3]

Verily Jesus Christ was the Good Shepherd. Happy those who can say, "The Lord is my Shepherd." On the other hand, those who slight the great blessings which are offered to the world through His death, are enemies to themselves and to God. By their own act, and of their own choice, they doom themselves to a death from which the love of Christ would save them. Oh, let no reader of this tract incur the guilt, or bring on himself the punishment, of impenitence and unbelief! The Good Shepherd willeth not that any should perish.

There is a second of our Lord's sayings, in the tenth chapter of John, which receives illustration from Eastern pastoral life:—"the sheep hear his (the shepherd's) voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." "I have made the experiment repeatedly," says the author we have already quoted. "If a stranger call, the sheep stop short, lift up their heads in alarm, and if the call is repeated they turn and flee, because they know not the voice of a stranger." And what our Lord says about their knowing the voice of their own shepherd, and following him, is "true to the letter." This traveller says: "They are so tame and so trained that they follow their keeper with the utmost docility. He leads them forth from the fold, or from the villages, just where he pleases. It is necessary that they should be taught to follow, and not to stray away into the unfenced fields of corn which lie so temptingly on either side. Any one that thus wanders is sure to get into trouble. The shepherd calls sharply from time to time, to remind them of his presence. They know his voice and follow on."

Yet this description does not apply to all the flock. Some sheep, we are informed, always keep near the shepherd. Each of them has a name which it answers joyfully; and the kind shepherd is ever distributing to them choice portions which he gathers for that purpose. These seem to be contented and happy. Many, however, are restless and discontented, straying into everybody's

[1] 1 John iv. 10. [2] Isa. liii. 6. [3] Rom. v. 6–8.

Digitized by Google

field, climbing into bushes, and even into trees, whence they often fall and break their limbs. Then there are others incurably reckless, which wander far away and are utterly lost.

And are there not, among the professed followers of Christ, those who are like these restless and reckless sheep? They will not hear Christ's voice, and will not go whither He leads, but choose their own ways, and are at last filled with the bitter fruits of their own devices? At the same time, what a beautiful idea does the traveller's description give us of the privileges which they enjoy who truly follow Christ, and have a sense of His nearness! Hapless must have been the condition of the people of Israel on their march from Egypt through the wilderness to the promised land, but for the pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day, which directed all their journeyings, and gave them the constant assurance of the presence of God with them. And more hapless still is the condition of men and women, who travel amidst the dangers, sorrows, and temptations of this wilderness-life without the perpetual guidance and protection of Him who is the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. By their unbelief they deprive themselves of a privilege which no words can fully set forth—the privilege of having Christ ever near them by His Holy Spirit to keep them from sin, to save them from spiritual danger, to comfort them in sorrow, and to strengthen them for all the toil and duty of their pilgrimage. And why, we ask every reader with all earnestness, should those whose souls are so very precious, and whose dangers are so very great, deny themselves the happiness of having such a Guide and such a Friend as Jesus Christ?

In nothing is the privilege of the true sheep of the Good Shepherd more manifest than in death. The traveller from whom we have quoted once saw a flock crossing a river after their shepherd. Some of the sheep entered boldly and went straight across. Others entered in doubt and alarm. Far from their guide, these missed the ford, and were carried down the river; yet one by one they all struggled over and made good their landing. A tender lamb was swept away towards the sea; but the shepherd leaped after it, took it into his bosom, and bore it trembling to the shore.

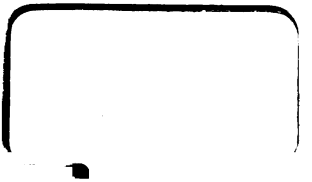
And thus it is with Christ's true people, "the sheep of His pasture." In their dying hour Christ is near to uphold and keep them. They hear His loving voice saying, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." With their eye fastened on Him, they pass over, and scarcely see the stream or feel its cold and threatening waves. None of all His true flock shall ever perish. Even the tenderest lambs shall be carried safely over. The most timid, who trembled to put their feet in the stream, shall join the rest of the saved flock in the presence of Him by whom their sins were pardoned and their souls sanctified.

LONDON: PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CROSS.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google